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THE WORKS OF
CHARLES LAMB

EDITED BY
WILLIAM MACDONALD

IN TWELVE VOLUMES
VOL. V

POEMS PLAYS
AND
ROSAMUND GRAY

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A young gentleman made
his appearance -

POEMS PLAYS

AND

ROSAMUND GRAY

BY

CHARLES LAMB

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

WILLIAM MACDONALD

WITH PORTRAITS

AND OTHER

ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

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PREFACE

READERS will, I am sure, be horrified to learn that after writing a long and elaborate Preface upon the confusion which prevailed in the editions of Lamb's Poetical Works up till 1884,[1] and showing how that confusion was originated by Lamb himself, and only perpetuated by the mistaken but beautiful fidelity of others, and how it had the effect of completely obscuring and destroying that Biographical Significance which it is the main function of Lamb's Poems, as a collection, to bear for us (that is, of course, after his few achievements in absolute Poetry have been reverently extracted and inscribed upon a carefully chosen page in the Golden Book of the Very Poets, who, unlike him, have nothing but their Poetry to give us, and live in our remembrance and affection by that alone), Readers will, I am sure, be horrified to learn that I have decided to cancel that valuable excursus into Bibliography and Pure Criticism, and have resolved instead to say merely a few bleak and barren words about the way in which this Edition has been arranged. They will, however, upon recovering from the first shock of sorrow, console themselves by remarking that in taking this step I am paying them the very high compliment of assuming that they can dispense with the prelection in question, and that they can be trusted to supply themselves with all the excellent and deeply-reasoned observations which do not appear in this place at this

[1] The date of Canon Ainger's edition of the Poems: the first edition—of the Poems—which had "any claims to being styled *edited*." See General Preface, vol. i. of this Edition, p. xxxviii.

time. Whether they shall appear in another place at another time will depend upon whether I receive sufficient public encouragement to go on with my "Life of Charles Lamb" in seven quarto volumes, of which I have already laid down the plan, and in which it would be my business to deal adequately with some three-hundred-and-sixty-five important passages of his life which have hitherto escaped detection.

But even in this immediate hour of small things a preliminary word must be said about the regions which the Editor of Lamb's poems must visit, the sources which he must draw upon. The general truth regarding these I shall set forth in the way of a similitude. It is a similitude which suits those international, imperial, and expansive days, for it enables me to bring in that blessed word Hinterland, to say nothing of Foreshore, Littoral, and other charms. Premising, then, that Lamb's "Works" of 1818 and his "Album Verses" of 1830 together make up the main ground—the continuous stretch of settled text or territory—which we draw upon for his Poems, I will say that to that stretch of text or territory there is both a Foreshore or Littoral, and a Hinterland. The Hinterland may be divided into zones, the nearest zone being most thoroughly explored, and the furthest off holding most secrets, if it holds anything at all. That is to say, behind —or, as they say in America, back of—those two main books, those immediate master-sources, there are other places in which Lamb's Poetry is to be looked for, places in which the contents of these two books made an earlier appearance, or (what is more important for the questing Editor) places in which things appeared that were never brought forward into those books at all. Among such places the most important—the first zone of our Hinterland—are of course those early Books in which Lamb's Poetry appeared along with

that of his friends Coleridge, Lloyd, and Southey. These Coleridge-Lloyd-Southey-Lamb books of the great early years are five in number. (*a*) The first Edition of Coleridge's Poems (1796), to which "Mr Charles Lamb of the India House" contributed some esteemed passages. (*b*) "Poems on the death of Priscilla Farmer" by Charles Lloyd (1796), to which Lamb contributed one piece. (*c*) The second Edition of Coleridge's Poems—really a new book—in which Lamb, now joined by Lloyd, again appeared (1797) "under cover of the greater Ajax," and to which he made a somewhat extensive contribution. (*d*) "Blank Verse," a joint volume by Lloyd and Lamb (1798), to which Lamb contributed seven pieces. (*e*) The "Annual Anthology" (1799), to which Lamb contributed one piece. To this list I ought perhaps to add the "John Woodvil" volume (1802), to which some odd pieces of prose and verse were appended. The interest of this first zone of the Hinterland—apart from its biographical interest, and its relation to the history of friendships that are now famous—consists in two things: (1) it yields an interesting crop of textual differences—things about which, however, we are careless souls: (2) it contains unexported products of great interest. Thus the remarkable Poem on *Living Without God in the World* was never brought forward from the "Annual Anthology"—the *Vision of Repentance* was never brought forward from the 1797 book—the poem *Written a Twelvemonth after the Events*, and other poems referring to the family tragedy, were never brought forward from "Blank Verse." And so forth. It will be seen, then, that those five books which form the first zone of the Hinterland have an authority only less than that of the "Works" and "Album Verses." Another zone, another distinct line, is constituted by certain Letters which are our only source for certain poems

or sets of verse: the *Epilogue to* "*Antonio*," for instance, which we should not possess but for the fact that Lamb transcribed it in a letter to Manning. The next zone, perhaps, should be those magazines and newspapers of the time in which we are instructed, by certain references (mostly in the Letters) to look for sonnets and other verses which he never republished. Such are the sonnet *The Lord of Life*, the verses entitled *To Sara and her Samuel*, and the early political exploits in the "Morning Post" and later in the "Examiner." Lastly, the printed copies or Plays for which he wrote Prologues and Epilogues—a good many more of both, I fancy, than have yet been found or identified. Now already, it will be seen, there are a good many regions of search for the Poems composed up till 1818, and also for those between 1818 and 1830. For just as the 1818 book left many things still outlying, so also "Album Verses" did not contain all the Poems written or published during, say, the Twenties. Another important point is to be noticed here: both of these collections contain Poems of which we should know nothing had they not been printed there: Poems which are not known to have been printed elsewhere, and to which there is no existing allusion in the Letters. Of this kind are the sonnets on the *Family Name* and to *John Lamb*, and other items in the 1818 book; and in the 1830 book, quite a large number of Poems. Of these we can only say, from the point of view of bibliography, that they are there, and we know no more about them. The inference is irresistible—that others also there may have been, which are not there, and of which consequently we shall never know anything. With which saddening reflection let us turn our back upon the Hinterland, and through Eden—or the "Works" of 1818 and the "Album Verses" of 1830—take our melancholy

way down to what I have called the Foreshore, or that region of the Unreclaimed which lies nearer to the coast of time on which we live. The uncollected poetical productions of Lamb's later years—more particularly the things which were born too late to be adopted into "Album Verses," whatever their merits—are the natural inhabitants of the Foreshore.

Here also we might divide the region to be explored, or exploited, into different zones, beginning again with those tracts or ground that lie nearer to the authoritative centre, and passing down to where land meets water and there is a dip to Oblivion. But the first fact to be noted in this region is, that we have not on the Foreshore anything comparable in importance, or in biographical interest, to the first zone of the Hinterland. What here takes the place of the Coleridge-Lloyd-Southey-Lamb books is the edition of "Charles Lamb's Poetical Works," published two years after his death (1836), and containing some ten new pieces belonging to about the "Album Verses" era. Next to that stretches a thin belt of thick jungle: all the Annuals and Beauty Books (as "The Gem," "The Talisman," "The Literary Pocket-Book")—all the monthly magazines (as "Blackwood's")—all the weekly journals (as "The Athenæum")—all the daily newspapers (as "The Times")—to which Lamb was in the way of making offerings of verse during the last three or four years of his life. In this miscellaneous wilderness a good many flowers of simple song have been found blooming in undeserved obscurity, and have been thence transplanted to where they would meet the universal eye, into the Editions of his Works. They are mostly found ticketed with his name or his initials. Next come, on this side also, certain Letters containing verses, or references to verses, which we should not else have known of; but the number

of these is not great. Another line or zone to be searched consists of printed books containing Lamb verses: as Cowden Clarke's "Recollections of Writers," Collier's "An Old Man's Diary," and, nearer our own day, Hollingshead's "My Lifetime": along with which must again be mentioned printed copies of Plays to which our scattered versifier wrote Prologues and Epilogues. But, continuing our bibliographical Anabasis, and drawing nearer to the sea, we come now upon a belt, a region of the Foreshore, to which there is nothing quite analogous among the many zones of the Hinterland. I refer to an innocent assemblage of Manuscript Albums, which make a kind of poetic daisy-chain along this margin of the debateable land. I have had three of those through my hands; there are others which I have not seen; and others again there are, I do not doubt, which have yet to open their innocent eyes to a consciousness of their full worth. It is from these Albums, and from the Magazines, Journals, and Newspapers of our second zone, that the main accessions of recent years have been drawn. Finally, just as at the hindmost verge of the Hinterland our straining eyes see shadowy forms of nomads of the desert that are beyond our reach and must for ever elude us—intangible contributions to magazines and newspapers, because we cannot lay our hands on them with certainty—so upon the Foreshore we are aware that there must have been a great collection of flotsom and jetsom that has been broken up upon the land or got carried beyond recall out into the great sea. By which name of flotsom and jetsom I mean to designate those stray pieces of verse, never sent to the printer, not copied into the body of any letter, not written in any private Album, but committed to single sheets of paper or to fly-leaves torn from books and passed on to friends, or simply allowed to fly away. Examples of this latter

sort may never have been very numerous, but of the other kind—sets of verses written on separate sheets, half-sheets, and scraps of paper as a thought occurred, or as a request was made by some "Laura too partial to her friend's inditing"—one cannot doubt that the number was very considerable. Some of the verses which have been saved by getting into print from time to time during the last generation, belonged doubtless to this category of flotsom and jetsom, of flying single leaves which a very slight wind of accident would have been sufficient to carry off for ever. A book's a book, though there's nothing in't; and even an Album will not be readily destroyed by those who are most ignorant regarding its personal associations and literary interest or monetary value. But a set of verses written upon a piece of paper is very apt to become, after the first vicissitude, the first change of hands, a piece of paper and nothing more, except that it is the worse for having something written on it.

This, then, is the true tale—alas! too briefly told —of the Hinterland and the Littoral: First, of that bibliographical region which already lay in the dark backward and abysm of his literary life when Lamb himself went to press with his Poems: Second, of that shoreward region which slopes towards our own island of Time, but slopes, unfortunately, towards a margin at which land meets water, and many things, carried too near, have from moment to moment been sucked in and lost. To save from this fate whatever later productions of his may still be extant on the Foreshore, and to bring to light whatever unrecovered treasure he may have planted in the Hinterland—treasure carefully withheld or carelessly forgotten when he made his two Collections of Verse—is the first business and the chief merit, should they prosper in their quest, of Lamb's Editors that are and shall

be. There is work in both regions still to be done, and at the least there are probabilities to be discussed.[1]

[1] For instance, at the very moment of my writing this, there comes a sonnet which a well-known Elian, Mr Bertram Dobell, has found in the "Examiner" and is strongly disposed to attribute to Lamb. Whatever its authorship, the sonnet is well worth quoting; so, with Mr Dobell's acquiescence, I convey it into this book instanter.

TO A LONDON STEEPLE.

Thou hollow, noisy, proud, aspiring steeple,
Uttering forth loudly that thou dost not feel:
A mournful now, and now a joyous peal;
Thou dost resemble very many people,
Who even now do act the self-same part,
Full of condolement and congratulation,
As doth become the beings of high station,
Much moved in tongue, but little moved in heart:
And on thy top a gilded thing is turning
Whichever way the wind blows:—strangely strong
Is the resemblance, and to the discerning
That veering vane doth well befit thy song:
Not to the giddy crowd—their upturn'd faces
Will worship any voice that comes from lofty places.

OLD CROFT.

For myself, I am doubtful of this being by Lamb. Nevertheless, there are strong points in favour of the supposition, especially the curious signature, which reminds us of the way in which Lamb played upon the name of Miss Fanny Holcroft. With her father (Thomas Holcroft, dramatist, general writer, Radical and Freethinker, died 1809) Lamb had been on terms of sincere friendship, and had even, I believe, collaborated with him. "One of the most candid, most upright, and single-meaning men I ever knew" (wrote Elia in 1823—see "Critical Essays," p. 229) "was the late Thomas Holcroft. I believe he never said one thing, and meant another, in his life; and, as near as I can guess, he never acted otherwise than with the most scrupulous attention to conscience." . . . This to Robert Southey, Poet Laureate, who was apt to instil the doctrine, if not to argue the point, that without the sacraments of the Church a man must be a very detrimental character indeed, not essentially differing from the evil-doers and the midnight blackguards of all time. Now if Lamb wrote this sonnet, it was in the Holcroft vein—in the vein of an observant, logical honesty and contempt for mush and humbug—that he wrote it: and from that to the signature "Old Croft" would be but a step. In any case, here is certainly an instance of "probabilities to be discussed."

This extensive topic, however, I shall not discuss any further at this time, but will rather beseech the Reader to recognise the true meaning and purpose of this preliminary digression. It may be regarded as supplementary to the General Preface—a work of which the true meaning and purpose have been most peevishly, perversely, and iniquitously mistaken. There are those (Heaven mend their poor wits) who have supposed that it was written in order to make some honoured predecessors of mine unhappy, and to show how abominable one can be and yet (very curiously) be in the right. Not to dignify an absurd idea by confuting it, let me say that the aim and purpose of my General Preface was to make the Reader of Lamb's works better acquainted with the subject in which he was interested than anyone had troubled to make him, by showing that the subject had a kind of history, and that in the editing of Lamb's works there had been a kind of evolution, its stages being marked by good work, however imperfect work, done by different men in different years, each of these men making, in one respect or another, a nearer approximation to the conception which we have all arrived at now. And what conception is that? Surely it is a recognition of the fact that in editing Lamb's works we have to do, not with the Author only of four or five published Books, but with a rarely sincere and singular Personality occurring in recent history, a particular blossoming of the best things of human nature, delightful and brave in sunshine and tempest—and therefore that we cannot be permanently content to accept as his Complete Works anything less than his whole recorded utterance, his total written residue of self-expression in fun and earnest, in gladness and grief. This, and some ideas relating to this, it was the business of my General Preface to instil; also, in passing, to add something to the stock of useful information at the

disposal of the more hustled members of that critical confraternity of which I myself am one of the chief, albeit one of the most obscure, disgraces. The useful information I speak of has been planted on good ground, and has yielded a crop of learned remark which cannot fail to have improved the general standard of intelligence. An interest in bibliography is indeed in the air, and Lamb was never partaken of with more relish, though there seems to be some difference of opinion as to whether a sharp sauce is, in spite of precedent and likelihood, the only garnishing to the dish after all. Personally, I like it, and recommend it to my friends, but for all that I rejoice to know that diversity of tastes is amply provided for. Bibliography, at any rate, is certainly in the air, an accepted interest of everybody. "We are all bibliographers now," as an Eminent Politician said, or will say on a future occasion; and in regard to this matter, and as touching the bibliographic history of Lamb's multifarious works, I have been but as the voice of one crying. Which brings me round again to my subject, the meaning and purpose, namely, of all the foregoing preliminary digression. The meaning and purpose—supplementary to the broad and general line of bibliographical history drawn in my General Preface—is to supply the Reader with such a conspectus of the situation in regard to Lamb's Poems (the kind of questions that arise as to their whereabouts and their whenabouts) as will make more interesting, or keep from seeming quite unnecessary, the detailed citations of sources to be found in the Notes.

And now, at length, to speak of the Arrangement. It is as far as possible chronological, in some respects more rigorously so than Canon Ainger's Edition. Lamb's own opinion was that the final arrangement for any man's completed Poetical Works was that of the order of their composition, and he urged this even in

the case of Wordsworth, whose work will, for other reasons besides its number and mass of poems, bear the strain of classification into Kinds better than most. Crabb Robinson, who reports the conversation in which Lamb delivered this view, agreed with him, but would have made an exception of the sonnet. I have not made an exception even of the sonnet, but have placed every poem in its proper place in the chronological series, as far as that can be made out. But there are a good many poems in "Album Verses" —poems which really are album verses, and acrostics upon the names of friends—of which we do not know the date. I have placed these in a section by themselves, at the end of the chronological series, which runs from p. 55 to p. 146. Amongst these album verses and acrostics there are a few, indeed, of which we do happen to know the date. Nevertheless, as they are a minority, I have decided to regard them as having more affinity for their kind than for their chronological relations, and have permitted them, with one exception, to pass into that section. The order in which this section is placed could be justified, if need be, but its correctness had better be taken for granted. Translations from Vincent Bourne and other Latinists being no part of Lamb's proper works, his self-expression, these have been placed in a section by themselves. In giving upon the opposite pages the Latin text of Vincent Bourne's Poems I have ventured upon an innovation which I am sure Lamb would have approved of, and which will, I hope, still further commend this particular volume to a large class of his constant Readers. Again, the divagations into political verse, which added an adventurous interest to some moments of Lamb's life, and also, I hope, some guineas to his gains, are an entirely extrinsic sort of concern: these also, therefore, have

their own circle. *Satan in Search of a Wife* closes this part of the book with a smell of brimstone and bad jokes, merrily meant, and therefore to be praised for the brave intention. Then come the Plays. I have put *The Wife's Trial* and *The Pawnbroker's Daughter* in the order in which they were published, though that is probably not the order of their composition. But the order of their composition is not very material, and there has seemed a certain gain in having two suites, each consisting of a blank-verse Play and a prose Farce. Finally, the Prologues and Epilogues come after, instead of before, the Plays, as being a kind of subsidiary dramatic composition, lesser stage properties, fragments of the scene.

And as to these Notes: if they seem to be very many, and some of them very long, the reasons for that enormousness are even now in the Reader's hands: the contents of this volume being represented by a list of over a hundred-and-fifty titles. Concerning practically every one of these the faithful Editor must indite something, be it only a reference to its source: and concerning fifty per cent. of the whole number he must indite something more informing and interesting than that, if he would not be guilty of such a disregard of his Readers' just claims upon him as I, for my part, would contemplate with horror. Certain of Lamb's Poems which fill no more than half a page call for a greater amount of discussion at the hands of an Editor than many an Elian Essay does, though *it* may fill its ten or twelve pages of a book like this. But the half-page of small type which is here given, for instance, to a discussion of the sonnet *Harmony in Unlikeness* is by no means superfluous if it disposes once for all, as I think it does, of the not very inspired conjecture—which has apparently become a received doctrine—that Mary Lamb, aged

between sixty and seventy, was one of the two "lovely damsels" described and compared with one another in a Poem which is no more "playful" than the *Lines on Tintern Abbey*. In the Notes on *Rosamund Gray* again, taken along with the Notes on some of the Early Sonnets, I have—not indeed disposed of anything, but—made out a case, I hope, in favour of our maintaining an open mind in regard to that question, which has been too hastily assumed to be closed, as to the real identity of Lamb's Alice or Anna, and as to where she lived in the years when he courted her. In the Note upon the Dramatic Fragment (I have called it *The Lover*) which Lamb sent to the "London Magazine" after keeping it by him for about twenty-four years, I have given the reasons for that surmise of mine (hinted at in the Memoir, p. xxvi), that Lamb was present at the wedding of his lost love; and have pointed out some reasonable grounds for associating with this occasion that mysterious giving-way of his mind at the end of 1795. These are conjectures; but they have at least as much likelihood in them, till they have been examined and dismissed, as a good many other conjectures which have been only too hastily accepted, and are never examined at all. Another kind of interest is touched upon, but equally again a contribution to biography is attempted, in the Notes to *Living Without God in the World* and the Poems immediately preceding. I have there pointed out that that "religious silence" of Lamb, which is so noticeable a character of his mind and his literature, falls upon his pages with a strange suddenness; and I have tried to indicate how the movement of his mind, as it is expressed in the Poems of this period, had brought him to an extremity of doctrinal narrowness—in which there could be no abiding—by which there was no way through—out of which there was

no exit but a return. And thus it comes that the religious silence which I referred to in the Memoir (p. xxxix) seems to fall, instantly, with dramatic abruptness, upon the very echoes, still sounding, of that utterance—*Living Without God in the World*—in which the religious or the dogmatic tendency of his mind had its fullest, but also its final expression. There are those, however, who care nothing for these things. To the attention of such I may commend, as an alternative interest, the true reading, here to be found for the first time, of a notable Lamb riddle which has been a long while before the world. The attempts which have hitherto been made to get at its meaning have been more interesting than exciting, for the experts have not managed thus far to come within fifteen hundred miles in space, and twenty-seven hundred years in time, of the truth of the matter. I refer to that mysterious signature "R. et R." which was appended to Lamb's contributions to "The Champion." The Riddle is so simple, and its reference so immediate, that everyone, I am sure, will now wonder that anyone should ever have had to guess twice at a mystery so transparent. I am, to be quite frank, rather disappointed at having discovered an explanation which every reader must instantly feel that he knew all the time. There is little talent, and no fun at all, in such an exploit. Much greater is my satisfaction in having been able to establish an unsuspected relation of kinship or clanship between "Mr H." and the author of the Dissertation upon Roast Pig, which will be found set in a way to exercise the best faculties of the most scientific minds.

W. M.

Note.—In setting up the contents of this volume, the text of the "Works" and of "Album Verses" has been followed. For poems that are found in neither of these collections, the nearest

approximation to such an authority as these represent has been sought: in (1) early Books, (2) in Magazines, (3) in Newspapers we have a scale, representing a diminishing likelihood of the proofs having been corrected by the Author. For access to autograph copies our thanks are due to Mrs Alfred Morrison, Mrs Blakiston, and Mr Edward Ayrton. "Summer Friends" has been set up from the Lloyd Manuscripts belonging to Mr Dent. To some two or three pieces which have hitherto been nameless, I have been kind enough to give a name. I have also, in a few instances where persons were indicated only by their initials in the titles of poems, given the name its full complement of letters: as "Edith Southey" instead of "Edith S." For this innovation I apologise to Edith Smith, but to nobody else.

ROSAMUND GRAY

CHAPTER I.

IT was noontide. The sun was very hot. An old gentlewoman sat spinning in a little arbour at the door of her cottage. She was blind; and her grand-daughter was reading the Bible to her. The old lady had just left her work, to attend to the story of Ruth.

"Orpah kissed her mother-in-law; but Ruth clave unto her." It was a passage she could not let pass without a *comment*. The moral she drew from it was not very *new*, to be sure. The girl had heard it a hundred times before—and a hundred times more she could have heard it, without suspecting it to be tedious. Rosamund loved her grandmother.

The old lady loved Rosamund too; and she had reason for so doing. Rosamund was to her at once a child and a servant. She had only *her* left in the world. They two lived together.

They had once known better days. The story of Rosamund's parents, their failure, their folly, and distresses, may be told another time. Our tale hath grief enough in it.

It is now about a year and a half since old Margaret Gray had sold off all her effects, to pay the debts of Rosamund's father—just after the mother had died of a broken heart; for her husband had fled his country to hide his shame in a foreign land. At that period the old lady retired to a small cottage in the village of Widford in Hertfordshire.

Rosamund, in her thirteenth year, was left destitute, without fortune or friends: she went with her grandmother. In all this time she had served her faithfully and lovingly.

Old Margaret Gray, when she first came into these parts, had eyes, and could see. The neighbours said, they had been dimmed by weeping: be that as it may, she was latterly grown quite blind. "God is very good to us, child; I can *feel* you yet." This she would sometimes say; and we need not wonder to hear, that Rosamund clave unto her grandmother.

Margaret retained a spirit unbroken by calamity. There was a principle *within*, which it seemed as if no outward circumstances could reach. It was a *religious* principle, and she had taught it to Rosamund; for the girl had mostly resided with her grandmother from her earliest years. Indeed she had taught her all that she knew herself; and the old lady's knowledge did not extend a vast way.

Margaret had drawn her maxims from observation; and a pretty long experience in life had contributed to make her, at times, a little *positive:* but Rosamund never argued with her grandmother.

Their library consisted chiefly in a large family Bible, with notes and expositions by various learned expositors, from Bishop Jewell downwards.

This might never be suffered to lie about like other books, but was kept constantly wrapt up in a handsome case of green velvet, with gold tassels—the only relic of departed grandeur they had brought with them to the cottage—everything else of value had been sold off for the purpose above mentioned.

This Bible Rosamund, when a child, had never dared to open without permission; and even yet, from habit, continued the custom. Margaret had parted with none of her *authority;* indeed it was never exerted with much harshness; and happy was

Rosamund, though a girl grown, when she could obtain leave to read her Bible. It was a treasure too valuable for an indiscriminate use; and Margaret still pointed out to her granddaughter *where to read.*

Besides this, they had the "Complete Angler, or Contemplative Man's Recreation," with cuts—"Pilgrim's Progress," the first part—a Cookery Book, with a few dry sprigs of rosemary and lavender stuck here and there between the leaves, (I suppose to point to some of the old lady's most favourite receipts,) and there was "Wither's Emblems," an old book, and quaint. The old-fashioned pictures in this last book were among the first exciters of the infant Rosamund's curiosity. Her contemplation had fed upon them in rather older years.

Rosamund had not read many books besides these; or if any, they had been only occasional companions: these were to Rosamund as old friends, that she had long known. I know not whether the peculiar cast of her mind might not be traced, in part, to a tincture she had received, early in life, from Walton, and Wither, from John Bunyan, and her Bible.

Rosamund's mind was pensive and reflective, rather than what passes usually for *clever* or *acute.* From a child she was remarkably shy and thoughtful—this was taken for stupidity and want of feeling; and the child has been sometimes whipt for being a *stubborn thing*, when her little heart was almost bursting with affection.

Even now her grandmother would often reprove her, when she found her too grave or melancholy; give her sprightly lectures about good-humour and rational mirth; and not unfrequently fall a crying herself, to the great discredit of her lecture. Those tears endeared her the more to Rosamund.

Margaret would say, "Child, I love you to cry, when I think you are only remembering your poor

dear father and mother—I would have you think about them sometimes—it would be strange if you did not—but I fear, Rosamund; I fear, girl, you sometimes think too deeply about your own situation and poor prospects in life. When you do so, you do wrong—remember the naughty rich man in the parable. He never had any good thoughts about God, and his religion: and that might have been your case."

Rosamund, at these times, could not reply to her; she was not in the habit of *arguing* with her grandmother; so she was quite silent on these occasions—or else the girl knew well enough herself, that she had only been sad to think of the desolate condition of her best friend, to see her, in her old age, so infirm and blind. But she had never been used to make excuses, when the old lady said she was doing wrong.

The neighbours were all very kind to them. The veriest rustics never passed them without a bow, or a pulling off of the hat—some show of courtesy, awkward indeed, but affectionate—with a "Good-morrow, madam," or "young madam," as it might happen.

Rude and savage natures, who seem born with a propensity to express contempt for anything that looks like prosperity, yet felt respect for its declining lustre.

The farmers, and better sort of people, (as they are called,) all promised to provide for Rosamund, when her grandmother should die. Margaret trusted in God and believed them.

She used to say, "I have lived many years in the world, and have never known people, *good people*, to be left without some friend; a relation, a benefactor, a *something*. God knows our wants—that it is not good for man or woman to be alone; and he always sends us a helpmate, a leaning place, a *somewhat*." Upon this sure ground of experience, did Margaret build her trust in Providence.

CHAPTER II.

ROSAMUND had just made an end of her story, (as I was about to relate,) and was listening to the application of the moral, (which said application she was old enough to have made herself, but her grandmother still continued to treat her, in many respects, as a child, and Rosamund was in no haste to lay claim to the title of womanhood,) when a young gentleman made his appearance, and interrupted them.

It was young Allan Clare, who had brought a present of peaches, and some roses, for Rosamund.

He laid his little basket down on a seat of the arbour; and in a respectful tone of voice, as though he were addressing a parent, enquired of Margaret "how she did."

The old lady seemed pleased with his attentions—answered his enquiries by saying, that "her cough was less troublesome a-nights, but she had not yet got rid of it, and probably she never might; but she did not like to tease young people with an account of her infirmities."

A few kind words passed on either side, when young Clare, glancing a tender look at the girl, who had all this time been silent, took leave of them with saying, "I shall bring *Elinor* to see you in the evening."

When he was gone, the old lady began to prattle.

"That is a sweet-dispositioned youth, and I *do* love him dearly, I must say it—there is such a modesty in all he says or does—he should not come here so often, to be sure, but I don't know how to help it; there is so much goodness in him, I can't find in my heart to forbid him. But, Rosamund, girl, I

must tell you beforehand; when you grow older, Mr Clare must be no companion for *you:* while you were both so young it was all very well—but the time is coming, when folks will think harm of it, if a rich young gentleman, like Mr Clare, comes so often to our poor cottage.—Dost hear, girl? why don't you answer? come, I did not mean to say any thing to hurt you—speak to me, Rosamund—nay, I must not have you be sullen—I don't love people that are sullen."

And in this manner was this poor soul running on, unheard and unheeded, when it occurred to her, that possibly the girl might not be *within hearing.*

And true it was, that Rosamund had slunk away at the first mention of Mr Clare's good qualities: and when she returned, which was not till a few minutes after Margaret had made an end of her fine harangue, it is certain her cheeks *did* look very *rosy.* That might have been from the heat of the day or from exercise, for she had been walking in the garden.

Margaret, we know, was blind; and, in this case, it was lucky for Rosamund that she was so, or she might have made some not unlikely surmises.

I must not have my reader infer from this, that I at all think it likely, a young maid of fourteen would fall in love without asking her grandmother's leave—the thing itself is not to be conceived.

To obviate all suspicions, I am disposed to communicate a little anecdote of Rosamund.

A month or two back her grandmother had been giving her the strictest prohibitions, in her walks, not to go near a certain spot, which was dangerous from the circumstance of a huge overgrown oak-tree spreading its prodigious arms across a deep chalk-pit, which they partly concealed.

To this fatal place Rosamund came one day—

female curiosity, we know, is older than the flood—let us not think hardly of the girl, if she partook of the sexual failing.

Rosamund ventured further and further—climbed along one of the branches—approached the forbidden chasm—her foot slippped—she was not killed—but it was by a mercy she escaped—other branches intercepted her fall—and with a palpitating heart she made her way back to the cottage.

It happened that evening, that her grandmother was in one of her best humours, caressed Rosamund, talked of old times, and what a blessing it was they two found a shelter in their little cottage, and in conclusion told Rosamund, "she was a good girl, and God would one day reward her for her kindness to her old blind grandmother."

This was more than Rosamund could bear. Her morning's disobedience came fresh into her mind, she felt she did not deserve all this from Margaret, and at last burst into a fit of crying, and made confession of her fault. The old gentlewoman kissed and forgave her.

Rosamund never went near that naughty chasm again.

Margaret would never have heard of this, if Rosamund had not told of it herself. But this young maid had a delicate moral sense, which would not suffer her to take advantage of her grandmother, to deceive her, or conceal anything from her, though Margaret was old, and blind, and easy to be imposed upon.

Another virtuous *trait* I recollect of Rosamund, and, now I am in the vein will tell it.

Some, I know, will think these things trifles—and they are so—but if these *minutiæ* make my reader better acquainted with Rosamund, I am content to abide the imputation.

These promises of character, hints, and early indications of a *sweet nature*, are to me more dear, and choice in the selection, than any of those pretty wild flowers, which this young maid, this virtuous Rosamund, has ever gathered in a fine May morning, to make a posy to place in the bosom of her old blind friend.

Rosamund had a very just notion of drawing, and would often employ her talent in making sketches of the surrounding scenery.

On a landscape, a larger piece than she had ever yet attempted, she had now been working for three or four months. She had taken great pains with it, given much time to it, and it was nearly finished. For *whose* particular inspection it was designed, I will not venture to conjecture. We know it could not have been for her grandmother's.

One day she went out on a short errand, and left her landscape on the table. When she returned, she found it *gone*.

Rosamund from the first suspected some mischief, but held her tongue. At length she made the fatal discovery. Margaret, in her absence, had laid violent hands on it; not knowing what it was, but taking it for some waste-paper, had torn it in half, and with one half of this elaborate composition had twisted herself up—a thread-paper!

Rosamund spread out her hands at sight of the disaster, gave her grandmother a roguish smile, but said not a word. She knew the poor soul would only fret, if she told her of it,—and when once Margaret was set a fretting for other people's misfortunes, the fit held her pretty long.

So Rosamund that very afternoon began another piece of the same size and subject; and Margaret, to her dying day, never dreamed of the mischief she had unconsciously done.

CHAPTER III.

ROSAMUND GRAY was the most beautiful young creature that eyes ever beheld. Her face had the sweetest expression in it—a gentleness—a modesty—a timidity—a certain charm—a grace without a name.

There was a sort of melancholy mingled in her smile. It was not the thoughtless levity of a girl—it was not the restrained simper of premature womanhood—it was something which the poet Young might have remembered, when he composed that perfect line,

> Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair.

She was a mild-eyed maid, and everybody loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

Her yellow hair fell in bright and curling clusters, like

> Those hanging locks
> Of young Apollo.

Her voice was trembling and musical. A graceful diffidence pleaded for her whenever she spake—and, if she said but little, that little found its way to the heart.

Young, and artless, and innocent, meaning no harm, and thinking none ; affectionate as a smiling infant—playful, yet inobtrusive, as a weaned lamb—every body loved her. Young Allan Clare, when but a boy, sighed for her.

The moon is shining in so brightly at my window,

where I write, that I feel it a crime not to suspend my employment awhile to gaze at her.

See how she glideth, in maiden honour, through the clouds, who divide on either side to do her homage.

Beautiful vision!—as I contemplate thee, an internal harmony is communicated to my mind, a moral brightness, a tacit analogy of mental purity; a calm like *that* we ascribe in fancy to the favoured inhabitants of thy fairy regions, "argent fields."

I marvel not, O moon, that heathen people, in the "olden times," did worship thy deity—Cynthia, Diana, Hecate. Christian Europe invokes thee not by these names now—her idolatry is of a blacker stain: Belial is her God—she worships Mammon.

False things are told concerning thee, fair planet—for I will ne'er believe that thou canst take a perverse pleasure in distorting the brains of us poor mortals. Lunatics! moonstruck! Calumny invented, and folly took up, these names. I would hope better things from thy mild aspect and benign influences.

Lady of Heaven, thou lendest thy pure lamp to light the way to the virgin mourner, when she goes to seek the tomb where her warrior lover lies.

Friend of the distressed, thou speakest only *peace* to the lonely sufferer, who walks forth in the placid evening, beneath thy gentle light, to chide at fortune, or to complain of changed friends, or unhappy loves.

Do I dream, or doth not even now a heavenly calm descend from thee into my bosom, as I meditate on the chaste loves of Rosamund and her Clare?

CHAPTER IV.

ALLAN CLARE was just two years older than Rosamund. He was a boy of fourteen, when he first became acquainted with her—it was soon after she had come to reside with her grandmother at Widford.

He met her by chance one day, carrying a pitcher in her hand, which she had been filling from a neighbouring well—the pitcher was heavy, and she seemed to be bending with its weight.

Allan insisted on carrying it for her—for he thought it a sin, that a delicate young maid, like her, should be so employed, and he stand idle by.

Allan had a propensity to do little kind offices for every body—but at the sight of Rosamund Gray his first fire was kindled—his young mind seemed to have found an object, and his enthusiasm was from that time forth awakened. His visits, from that day, were pretty frequent at the cottage.

He was never happier than when he could get Rosamund to walk out with him. He would make her admire the scenes he admired—fancy the wild flowers he fancied—watch the clouds he was watching—and not unfrequently repeat to her poetry, which he loved, and make her love it.

On their return, the old lady, who considered them yet as but children, would bid Rosamund fetch Mr Clare a glass of her currant-wine, a bowl of new milk, or some cheap dainty, which was more welcome to Allan than the costliest delicacies of a prince's court.

The boy and girl, for they were no more at that age, grew fond of each other—more fond than either of them suspected.

> They would sit, and sigh,
> And look upon each other, and conceive
> Not what they ail'd; yet something they did ail,
> And yet were well—and yet they were not well;
> And what was their disease, they could not tell.

And thus,

> In this first garden of their simpleness
> They spend their childhood.

A circumstance had lately happened, which in some sort altered the nature of their attachment.

Rosamund was one day reading the tale of "Julia de Roubigné"—a book which young Clare had lent her.

Allan was standing by, looking over her, with one hand thrown round her neck, and a finger of the other pointing to a passage in Julia's third letter.

"Maria! in my hours of visionary indulgence, I have sometimes painted to myself a *husband*—no matter whom—comforting me amidst the distresses, which fortune had laid upon us. I have smiled upon him through my tears; tears, not of anguish, but of tenderness;—our children were playing around us, unconscious of misfortune; we had taught them to be humble, and to be happy; our little shed was reserved to us, and their smiles to cheer it.—I have imagined the luxury of such a scene, and affliction became a part of my dream of happiness."

The girl blushed as she read, and trembled—she had a sort of confused sensation, that Allan was noticing her—yet she durst not lift her eyes from the book, but continued reading, scarce knowing what she read.

Allan guessed the cause of her confusion. Allan trembled too—his colour came and went—his feeling became impetuous—and, flinging both arms round her neck, he kissed his young favourite.

Rosamund was vexed and pleased, soothed and frightened, all in a moment—a fit of tears came to her relief.

Allan had indulged before in these little freedoms, and Rosamund had thought no harm of them—but from this time the girl grew timid and reserved—distant in her manner, and careful of her behaviour, in Allan's presence—not seeking his society as before, but rather shunning it—delighting more to feed upon his idea in absence.

Allan too, from this day, seemed changed: his manner became, though not less tender, yet more respectful and diffident—his bosom felt a throb it had till now not known, in the society of Rosamund—and, if he was less familiar with her than in former times, that charm of delicacy had superadded a grace to Rosamund, which, while he feared, he loved.

There is a *mysterious character*, heightened, indeed, by fancy and passion, but not without foundation in reality and observation, which true lovers have ever imputed to the object of their affections. This character Rosamund had now acquired with Allan—something *angelic*, *perfect*, *exceeding nature*.

Young Clare dwelt very near to the cottage. He had lost his parents, who were rather wealthy, early in life; and was left to the care of a sister, some ten years older than himself.

Elinor Clare was an excellent young lady—discreet, intelligent, and affectionate. Allan revered her as a parent, while he loved her as his own familiar friend. He told all the little secrets of his heart to her—but there was *one*, which he had hitherto unaccountably concealed from her—namely, the extent of his regard for Rosamund.

Elinor knew of his visits to the cottage, and was no stranger to the persons of Margaret and her granddaughter. She had several times met them, when

she had been walking with her brother—a civility usually passed on either side—but Elinor avoided troubling her brother with any unseasonable questions.

Allan's heart often beat, and he has been going to tell his sister *all*—but something like shame (false or true, I shall not stay to inquire) had hitherto kept him back—still the secret, unrevealed, hung upon his conscience like a crime—for his temper had a sweet and noble frankness in it, which bespake him yet a virgin from the world.

There was a fine openness in his countenance—the character of it somewhat resembled Rosamund's—except that more fire and enthusiasm were discernible in Allan's; his eyes were of a darker blue than Rosamund's—his hair was of a chestnut colour—his cheeks ruddy, and tinged with brown. There was a cordial sweetness in Allan's smile, the like to which I never saw in any other face.

Elinor had hitherto connived at her brother's attachment to Rosamund. Elinor, I believe, was something of a physiognomist, and thought she could trace in the countenance and manner of Rosamund qualities which no brother of her's need be ashamed to love.

The time was now come, when Elinor was desirous of knowing her brother's favourite more intimately—an opportunity offered of breaking the matter to Allan.

The morning of the day, in which he carried his present of fruit and flowers to Rosamund, his sister had observed him more than usually busy in the garden, culling fruit with a nicety of choice not common to him.

She came up to him, unobserved, and, taking him by the arm, enquired, with a questioning smile—"What are you doing, Allan? and who are those peaches designed for?"

"For Rosamund Gray"—he replied—and his heart seemed relieved of a burthen, which had long oppressed it.

"I have a mind to become acquainted with your handsome friend—will you introduce me, Allan? I think I should like to go and see her this afternoon."

"Do go, do go, Elinor—you don't know what a good creature she is; and old blind Margaret, you will like *her* very much."

His sister promised to accompany him after dinner; and they parted. Allan gathered no more peaches, but hastily cropping a few roses to fling into his basket, went away with it half filled, being impatient to announce to Rosamund the coming of her promised visitor.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Allan returned home, he found an invitation had been left for him, in his absence, to spend that evening with a young friend, who had just quitted a public school in London, and was come to pass one night in his father's house at Widford, previous to his departure the next morning for Edinburgh University.

It was Allan's bosom friend—they had not met for some months—and it was probable, a much longer time must intervene, before they should meet again.

Yet Allan could not help looking a little blank, when he first heard of the invitation. This was to have been an important evening. But Elinor soon relieved her brother, by expressing her readiness to go alone to the cottage.

"I will not lose the pleasure I promised myself, whatever you may determine upon, Allan—I will go by myself rather than be disappointed."

"Will you, will you, Elinor?"

Elinor promised to go—and I believe, Allan, on a second thought, was not very sorry to be spared the awkwardness of introducing two persons to each other, both so dear to him, but either of whom might happen not much to fancy the other.

At times, indeed, he was confident that Elinor *must* love Rosamund, and Rosamund *must* love Elinor—but there were also times in which he felt misgivings—it was an event he could scarce hope for very joy!

Allan's *real presence* that evening was more at the cottage than at the house, where his *bodily semblance* was visiting—his friend could not help

complaining of a certain absence of mind, a *coldness* he called it.

It might have been expected, and in the course or things predicted, that Allan would have asked his friend some questions of what had happened since their last meeting, what his feelings were on leaving school, the probable time when they should meet again, and a hundred natural questions which friendship is most lavish of at such times; but nothing of all this ever occurred to Allan—they did not even settle the method of their future correspondence.

The consequence was, as might have been expected, Allan's friend thought him much altered, and, after his departure, sat down to compose a doleful sonnet about a "faithless friend."—I do not find that he ever finished it—indignation, or a dearth of rhymes, causing him to break off in the middle.

CHAPTER VI.

IN my catalogue of the little library at the cottage, I forgot to mention a book of Common Prayer. My reader's fancy might easily have supplied the omission—old ladies of Margaret's stamp (God bless them) may as well be without their spectacles, or their elbow chair, as their prayer-book—I love them for it.

Margaret's was a handsome octavo, printed by Baskerville, the binding red, and fortified with silver at the edges. Out of this book it was their custom every afternoon to read the proper psalms appointed for the day.

The way they managed was this : they took verse by verse—Rosamund *read* her little portion, and Margaret repeated her's, in turn, from memory—for Margaret could say all the Psalter by heart, and a good part of the Bible besides. She would not unfrequently put the girl right when she stumbled or skipped. This Margaret imputed to giddiness—a quality which Rosamund was by no means remarkable for—but old ladies, like Margaret, are not in all instances alike discriminative.

They had been employed in this manner just before Miss Clare arrived at the cottage. The psalm they had been reading was the hundred and fourth—Margaret was naturally led by it into a discussion of the works of creation.

There had been *thunder* in the course of the day —an occasion of instruction which the old lady never let pass—she began—

"Thunder has a very awful sound—some say, God Almighty is angry whenever it thunders—that it is

the voice of God speaking to us—for my part, I am not afraid of it"——

And in this manner the old lady was going on to particularise, as usual, its beneficial effects, in clearing the air, destroying of vermin, &c., when the entrance of Miss Clare put an end to her discourse.

Rosamund received her with respectful tenderness —and, taking her grandmother by the hand, said, with great sweetness, "Miss Clare is come to see you, grandmother."

"I beg pardon, lady—I cannot *see* you—but you are heartily welcome—is your brother with you, Miss Clare? I don't hear him"——

"He could not come, madam, but he sends his love by me."

"You have an excellent brother, Miss Clare—but pray do us the honour to take some refreshment— Rosamund"——

And the old lady was going to give directions for a bottle of her currant wine—when Elinor, smiling, said "she was come to take a cup of tea with her, and expected to find no ceremony."

"After tea, I promise myself a walk with *you*, Rosamund, if your grandmother can spare you." —Rosamund looked at her grandmother.

"O, for that matter, I should be sorry to debar the girl from any pleasure—I am sure it's lonesome enough for her to be with *me* always—and if Miss Clare will take you out, child, I shall do very well by myself till you return—it will not be the first time, you know, that I have been left here alone—some of the neighbours will be dropping in bye and bye—or, if *not*, I shall take no harm."

Rosamund had all the simple manners of a child —she kissed her grandmother, and looked happy.

All tea-time the old lady's discourse was little more than a panegyric on young Clare's good qualities.

Elinor looked at her young friend, and smiled. Rosamund was beginning to look grave—but there was a cordial sunshine in the face of Elinor, before which any clouds of reserve, that had been gathering on Rosamund's soon brake away.

"Does your grandmother ever go out, Rosamund?"

Margaret prevented the girl's reply, by saying—"my dear young lady, I am an old woman, and very infirm—Rosamund takes me a few paces beyond the door sometimes—but I walk very badly—I love best to sit in our little arbour, when the sun shines—I can yet feel it warm and cheerful—and, if I lose the beauties of the season, I shall be very happy if you and Rosamund can take delight in this fine summer evening."

"I shall want to rob you of Rosamund's company now and then, if we like one another. I had hoped to have seen *you*, madam, at our house. I don't know whether we could not make room for you to come and live with us—what say you to it? Allan would be proud to tend you, I am sure; and Rosamund and I should be nice company."

Margaret was all unused to such kindnesses, and wept—Margaret had a great spirit—yet she was not above accepting an obligation from a worthy person—there was a delicacy in Miss Clare's manner—she could have no interest, but pure goodness, to induce her to make the offer—at length the old lady spake from a full heart.

"Miss Clare, this little cottage received us in our distress—it gave us shelter when we had *no home*—we have praised God in it—and, while life remains, I think I shall never part from it—Rosamund does everything for me"—

"And will do, grandmother, as long as I live;"—and then Rosamund fell a crying.

"You are a good girl, Rosamund, and if you do but find friends when I am dead and gone, I shall want no better accommodation while I live—but, God bless you, lady, a thousand times, for your kind offer."

Elinor was moved to tears, and, affecting a sprightliness, bade Rosamund prepare for her walk. The girl put on her white silk bonnet; and Elinor thought she never beheld so lovely a creature.

They took leave of Margaret, and walked out together—they rambled over all Rosamund's favourite haunts—through many a sunny field—by secret glade or woodwalk, where the girl had wandered so often with her beloved Clare.

Who now so happy as Rosamund? She had oft-times heard Allan speak with great tenderness of his sister—she was now rambling, arm in arm, with that very sister, the "vaunted sister" of her friend, her beloved Clare.

Not a tree, not a bush, scarce a wild-flower in their path, but revived in Rosamund some tender recollection, a conversation perhaps, or some chaste endearment. Life, and a new scene of things, were now opening before her—she was got into a fairy land of uncertain existence.

Rosamund was too happy to talk much—but Elinor was delighted with her when she *did* talk:—the girl's remarks were suggested, most of them, by the passing scene—and they betrayed, all of them, the liveliness of present impulse:—her conversation did not consist in a comparison of vapid feeling, an interchange of sentiment lip-deep—it had all the freshness of young sensation in it.

Sometimes they talked of Allan.

"Allan is very good," said Rosamund, "very good *indeed* to my grandmother—he will sit with her, and hear her stories, and read to her, and try to divert her

a hundred ways. I wonder sometimes he is not tired. She talks him to death!"

"Then you confess, Rosamund, that the old lady *does* tire *you* sometimes?"

"O no, I did not mean *that*—it's very different—I am used to all her ways, and I can humour her, and please her, and I ought to do it, for she is the only friend I ever had in the world."

The new friends did not conclude their walk till it was late, and Rosamund began to be apprehensive about the old lady, who had been all this time alone.

On their return to the cottage, they found that Margaret had been somewhat impatient—old ladies, *good old ladies*, will be so at times—age is timorous and suspicious of danger, where no danger is.

Besides, it was Margaret's bed-time, for she kept very good hours—indeed, in the distribution of her meals, and sundry other particulars, she resembled the livers in the antique world, more than might well beseem a creature of this.

So the new friends parted for that night—Elinor having made Margaret promise to give Rosamund leave to come and see her the next day.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS CLARE, we may be sure, made her brother very happy, when she told him of the engagement she had made for the morrow, and how delighted she had been with his handsome friend.

Allan, I believe, got little sleep that night. I know not, whether joy be not a more troublesome bed-fellow than grief—hope keeps a body very wakeful, I know.

Elinor Clare was the best good creature—the least selfish human being I ever knew—always at work for other people's good, planning other people's happiness—continually forgetful to consult for her own personal gratifications, except indirectly, in the welfare of another—while her parents lived, the most attentive of daughters—since they died, the kindest of sisters—I never knew but *one* like her.

It happens that I have some of this young lady's *letters* in my possession—I shall present my reader with one of them. It was written a short time after the death of her mother, and addressed to a cousin, a dear friend of Elinor's, who was then on the point of being married to Mr Beaumont, of Staffordshire, and had invited Elinor to assist at her nuptials. I will transcribe it with minute fidelity.

ELINOR CLARE TO MARIA LESLIE.

Widford, July the —, 17—.

HEALTH, Innocence, and Beauty, shall be thy bridemaids, my sweet cousin. I have no heart to undertake the office. Alas! what have I to do in the house of feasting?

Maria ! I fear lest my griefs should prove obtrusive. Yet bear with me a little—I have recovered already a share of my former spirits.

I fear more for Allan than myself. The loss of two such parents, with so short an interval, bears very heavy on him. The boy *hangs* about me from morning till night. He is perpetually forcing a smile into his poor pale cheeks—you know the sweetness of his smile, Maria.

To-day, after dinner, when he took his glass of wine in his hand, he burst into tears, and would not, or could not then, tell me the reason—afterwards he told me—"he had been used to drink Mamma's health after dinner, and *that* came in his head and made him cry." I feel the claims the boy has upon me—I perceive that I am living to *some end*—and the thought supports me.

Already I have attained to a state of complacent feelings—my mother's lessons were not thrown away upon her Elinor.

In the visions of last night her spirit seemed to stand at my bed-side—a light, as of noonday, shone upon the room—she opened my curtains—she smiled upon me with the same placid smile as in her life-time. I felt no fear. "Elinor," she said, "for my sake take care of young Allan,"—and I awoke with calm feelings.

Maria ! shall not the meeting of blessed spirits, think you, be something like this ?—I think, I could even now behold my mother without dread—I would ask pardon of her for all my past omissions of duty, for all the little asperities in my temper, which have so often grieved her gentle spirit when living. Maria ! I think she would not turn away from me.

Oftentimes a feeling, more vivid than memory, brings her before me—I see her sit in her old elbow chair—her arms folded upon her lap—a tear upon

her cheek, that seems to upbraid her unkind daughter for some inattention—I wipe it away and kiss her honoured lips.

Maria! when I have been fancying all this, Allan will come in, with his poor eyes red with weeping, and taking me by the hand, destroy the vision in a moment.

I am prating to you, my sweet cousin, but it is the prattle of the heart, which Maria loves. Besides, whom have I to talk to of these things but you—you have been my counsellor in times past, my companion, and sweet familiar friend. Bear with me a little—I mourn the "cherishers of my infancy."

I sometimes count it a blessing, that my father did not prove the *survivor*. You know something of his story. You know there was a foul tale current—it was the busy malice of that bad man, S——, which helped to spread it abroad—you will recollect the active good-nature of our friends W—— and T——; what pains they took to undeceive people—with the better sort their kind labours prevailed; but there was still a party who shut their ears. You know the issue of it. My father's great spirit bore up against it for some time—my father never was a *bad* man—but that spirit was broken at the last—and the greatly-injured man was forced to leave his old paternal dwelling in Staffordshire—for the neighbours had begun to point at him. Maria! I have *seen* them *point* at him, and have been ready to drop.

In this part of the country, where the slander had not reached, he sought a retreat—and he found a still more grateful asylum in the daily solicitudes of the best of wives.

"An enemy hath done this," I have heard him say—and at such times my mother would speak to him so soothingly of forgiveness, and long-suffering, and the bearing of injuries with patience; would heal all

his wounds with so gentle a touch ;—I have seen the old man weep like a child.

The gloom that beset his mind, at times betrayed him into scepticism—he has doubted if there be a Providence ! I have heard him say, " God has built a brave world, but methinks he has left his creatures to bustle in it *how they may*."

At such times he could not endure to hear my mother talk in a religious strain. He would say, " Woman, have done—you confound, you perplex me, when you talk of these matters, and for one day at least unfit me for the business of life."

I have seen her look at him—O God, Maria ! such a *look !* it plainly spake that she was willing to have shared her precious hope with the partner of her earthly cares—but she found a repulse—

Deprived of such a wife, think you, the old man could have long endured his existence ? or what consolation would his wretched daughter have had to offer him, but silent and imbecile tears ?

My sweet cousin, you will think me tedious—and I am so—but it does me good to talk these matters over. And do not you be alarmed for me—my sorrows are subsiding into a deep and sweet resignation. I shall soon be sufficiently composed, I know it, to participate in my friend's happiness.

Let me call her, while yet I may, my own Maria Leslie ! Methinks, I shall not like you by any other name. Beaumont ! Maria Beaumont ! it hath a strange sound with it—I shall never be reconciled to this name—but do not you fear—Maria Leslie shall plead with me for Maria Beaumont.

And now, my sweet Friend,
God love you, and your
ELINOR CLARE.

I find in my collection several letters, written soon

after the date of the preceding, and addressed all of them to Maria Beaumont.—I am tempted to make some short extracts from these—my tale will suffer interruption by them—but I was willing to preserve whatever memorials I could of Elinor Clare.

FROM ELINOR CLARE TO MARIA BEAUMONT.

(AN EXTRACT.)

"—— I HAVE been strolling out for half an hour in the fields; and my mind has been occupied by thoughts, which Maria has a right to participate. I have been bringing my *mother* to my recollection. My heart ached with the remembrance of infirmities, that made her closing years of life so sore a trial to her.

I was concerned to think, that our family differences have been one source of disquiet to her. I am sensible that *this last* we are apt to exaggerate after a person's death—and surely, in the main, there was considerable harmony among the members of our little family—still I was concerned to think, that we ever gave her gentle spirit disquiet.

I thought on years back—on all my parents' friends —the H——s, the F——s, on D—— S——, and on many a merry evening, in the fire-side circle, in that comfortable back parlour—it is never used now.—

O ye *Matravises*[1] of the age, ye know not what ye lose, in despising these petty topics of endeared remembrance, associated circumstances of past times; —ye know not the throbbings of the heart, tender yet affectionately familiar, which accompany the dear and honoured names of *father* or of *mother*.

Maria! I thought on all these things; my heart ached at the review of them—it yet aches, while

[1] This name will be explained presently.

I write this—but I am never so satisfied with my train of thoughts, as when they run upon these subjects—the tears, they draw from us, meliorate and soften the heart, and keep fresh within us that memory of dear friends dead, which alone can fit us for a re-admission to their society hereafter."

FROM ANOTHER LETTER.

"—— I HAD a bad dream this morning—that Allan was dead—and who, of all persons in the world, do you think, put on mourning for him? Why *Matravis*.—This alone might cure me of superstitious thoughts, if I were inclined to them; for why should Matravis *mourn* for us, or our family?—*Still* it was pleasant to awake, and find it but a dream.—Methinks something like an awaking from an ill dream shall the Resurrection from the Dead be.—Materially different from our accustomed scenes, and ways of life, the *World to come* may possibly not be—still it is represented to us under the notion of a *Rest*, a *Sabbath*, a state of bliss."

FROM ANOTHER LETTER.

"—— METHINKS, you and I should have been born under the same roof, sucked the same milk, conned the same horn-book, thumbed the same Testament, together:—for we have been more than sisters, Maria!

Something will still be whispering to me, that I shall one day be inmate of the same dwelling with my cousin, partaker with her in all the delights, which spring from mutual good offices, kind words, attentions in sickness and in health,—conversation, sometimes innocently trivial, and at others profitably serious;—books read and commented on, together; meals ate, and walks taken, together,—and conferences, how we may best do good to this poor person

or that, and wean our spirits from the world's *cares*, without divesting ourselves of its *charities*. What a picture I have drawn, Maria!—and none of all these things may ever come to pass."

FROM ANOTHER LETTER.

"—— CONTINUE to write to me, my sweet cousin. Many good thoughts, resolutions, and proper views of things, pass through the mind in the course of the day, but are lost for want of committing them to paper. Seize them, Maria, as they pass, these Birds of Paradise, that show themselves and are gone,—and make a grateful present of the precious fugitives to your friend.

To use a homely illustration, just rising in my fancy,—shall the good housewife take such pains in pickling and preserving her worthless fruits, her walnuts, her apricots, and quinces—and is there not much *spiritual housewifery* in treasuring up our mind's best fruits—our heart's meditations in its most favoured moments?

This sad simile is much in the fashion of the old Moralisers, such as I conceive honest Baxter to have been, such as Quarles and Wither were, with their curious, serio-comic, quaint emblems. But they sometimes reach the heart, when a more elegant simile rests in the fancy.

Not low and mean, like these, but beautifully familiarised to our conceptions, and condescending to human thoughts and notions, are all the discourses of our LORD—conveyed in parable, or similitude, what easy access do they win to the heart, through the medium of the delighted imagination! speaking of heavenly things in fable, or in simile, drawn from earth, from objects *common, accustomed.*

Life's business, with such delicious little interruptions as our correspondence affords, how pleasant it

is!—why can we not paint on the dull paper our whole feelings, exquisite as they rise up?"

FROM ANOTHER LETTER.

"—— I HAD meant to have left off at this place; but, looking back, I am sorry to find too gloomy a cast tincturing my last page—a representation of life false and unthankful. Life is *not* all vanity and disappointment—it hath much of evil in it, no doubt; but to those who do not misuse it, it affords comfort, *temporary* comfort, much—much that endears us to it, and dignifies it—many true and good feelings, I trust, of which we need not be ashamed—hours of tranquillity and hope.—But the morning was dull and overcast, and my spirits were under a cloud. I feel my error.

Is it no blessing that we two love one another so dearly—that Allan is left me—that you are settled in life—that worldly affairs go smooth with us both—above all that our lot hath fallen to us in a Christian country? Maria! these things are not little. I will consider life as a long feast, and not forget to say grace."

FROM ANOTHER LETTER.

"—— ALLAN has written to me—you know, he is on a visit at his old tutor's in Gloucestershire—he is to return home on Thursday—Allan is a dear boy—he concludes his letter, which is very affectionate throughout, in this manner—

Elinor, I charge you to learn the following stanza by heart—

> The monarch may forget his crown,
> That on his head an hour hath been;
> The bridegroom may forget his bride
> Was made his wedded wife yestreen;

The mother may forget her child,
That smiles so sweetly on her knee:
But I'll remember thee, Glencairn,
And all that thou hast done for me.

The lines are in Burns—you know, we read him for the first time together at Margate—and I have been used to refer them to you, and to call you, in my mind, *Glencairn*—for you were always very, very good to me. I had a thousand failings, but you would love me in spite of them all. I am going to drink your health."

I shall detain my reader no longer from the narrative.

CHAPTER VIII.

THEY had but four rooms in the cottage. Margaret slept in the biggest room upstairs, and her granddaughter in a kind of closet adjoining, where she could be within hearing, if her grandmother should call her in the night.

The girl was often disturbed in that manner—two or three times in a night she has been forced to leave her bed, to fetch her grandmother's cordials, or do some little service for her—but she knew that Margaret's ailings were *real* and pressing, and Rosamund never complained—never suspected, that her grandmother's requisitions had anything unreasonable in them.

The night she parted with Miss Clare, she had helped Margaret to bed, as usual—and, after saying her prayers, as the custom was, kneeling by the old lady's bed-side, kissed her grandmother, and wished her a good-night—Margaret blessed her, and charged her to go to bed directly. It was her customary injunction, and Rosamund had never dreamed of disobeying.

So she retired to her little room. The night was warm and clear—the moon very bright—her window commanded a view of *scenes* she had been tracing in the day-time with Miss Clare.

All the events of the day past, the occurrences of their walk, arose in her mind. She fancied she should like to retrace those scenes—but it was now nine o'clock, a late hour in the village.

Still she fancied it would be very charming—and then her grandmother's injunction came powerfully to her recollection—she sighed, and turned from

the window—and walked up and down her little room.

Ever, when she looked at the window, the wish returned. It was not so *very late*. The neighbours were yet about, passing under the window to their homes—she thought, and thought again, till her sensations became vivid, even to painfulness—her bosom was aching to give them vent.

The village clock struck ten!—the neighbours ceased to pass under the window. Rosamund, stealing downstairs, fastened the latch behind her, and left the cottage.

One, that knew her, met her, and observed her with some surprise. Another recollects having wished her a good-night. Rosamund never returned to the cottage.

An old man, that lay sick in a small house adjoining to Margaret's, testified the next morning, that he had plainly heard the old creature calling for her granddaughter. All the night long she made her moan, and ceased not to call upon the name of Rosamund. But no Rosamund was there—the voice died away, but not till near day-break.

When the neighbours came to search in the morning, Margaret was missing! She had *straggled* out of bed, and made her way into Rosamund's room—worn out with fatigue and fright, when she found the girl not there, she had laid herself down to die—and, it is thought, she died *praying*—for she was discovered in a kneeling posture, her arms and face extended on the pillow, where Rosamund had slept the night before—a smile was on her face in death.

CHAPTER IX.

FAIN would I draw a veil over the transactions of that night—but I cannot—grief, and burning shame, forbid me to be silent—black deeds are about to be made public, which reflect a stain upon our common nature.

Rosamund, enthusiastic and improvident, wandered unprotected to a distance from her guardian doors—through lonely glens, and wood walks, where she had rambled many a *day* in safety—till she arrived at a shady copse, out of the hearing of any human habitation.

Matravis met her.——"Flown with insolence and wine," returning home late at night, he passed that way!

Matravis was a very ugly man. Sallow complexioned! and if hearts can wear that colour, his heart was sallow-complexioned also.

A young man with *gray* deliberation! cold and systematic in all his plans; and all his plans were evil. His very lust was systematic.

He would brood over his bad purposes for such a dreary length of time, that it might have been expected, some solitary check of conscience must have intervened to save him from commission. But that *Light from Heaven* was extinct in his dark bosom.

Nothing that is great, nothing that is amiable, existed for this unhappy man. He feared, he envied, he suspected; but he never loved. The sublime and beautiful in nature, the excellent and becoming in morals, were things placed beyond the capacity of his sensations. He loved not poetry—nor ever took a lonely walk to meditate—never beheld virtue, which

he did not try to disbelieve, or female beauty and innocence, which he did not lust to contaminate.

A sneer was perpetually upon his face, and malice *grinning* at his heart. He would say the most ill-natured things, with the least remorse, of any man I ever knew. This gained him the reputation of a wit—other *traits* got him the reputation of a villain.

And this man formerly paid his court to Elinor Clare !—with what success I leave my readers to determine.—It was not in Elinor's nature to despise any living thing—but in the estimation of this man, to be rejected was to be *despised*—and Matravis *never forgave.*

He had long turned his eyes upon Rosamund Gray. To steal from the bosom of her friends the jewel they prized so much, the little ewe lamb they held so dear, was a scheme of delicate revenge, and Matravis had a two-fold motive for accomplishing this young maid's ruin.

Often had he met her in her favourite solitudes, but found her ever cold and inaccessible. Of late the girl had avoided straying far from her own home, in the fear of meeting him—but she had never told her fears to Allan.

Matravis had, till now, been content to be a villain within the limits of the law—but, on the present occasion, hot fumes of wine, co-operating with his deep desire of revenge, and the insolence of an unhoped for meeting, overcame his customary prudence, and Matravis rose, at once, to an audacity of glorious mischief.

Late at night he met her, a lonely, unprotected, virgin—no friend at hand—no place near of refuge.

Rosamund Gray, my soul is exceeding sorrowful for thee—I loathe to tell the hateful circumstances of thy wrongs. Night and silence were the only

witnesses of this young maid's disgrace—Matravis fled.

Rosamund, polluted and disgraced, wandered, an abandoned thing, about the fields and meadows till day-break. Not caring to return to the cottage, she sat herself down before the gate of Miss Clare's house —in a stupor of grief.

Elinor was just rising, and had opened the windows of her chamber, when she perceived her desolate young friend. She ran to embrace her—she brought her into the house—she took her to her bosom—she kissed her—she spake to her; but Rosamund could not speak.

Tidings came from the cottage. Margaret's death was an event, which could not be kept concealed from Rosamund. When the sweet maid heard of it, she languished, and fell sick—she never held up her head after that time.

If Rosamund had been a *sister*, she could not have been kindlier treated, than by her two friends.

Allan had prospects in life—might, in time, have married into any of the first families in Hertfordshire —but Rosamund Gray, humbled though she was, and put to shame, had yet a charm for *him*—and he would have been content to share his fortunes with her yet, if Rosamund would have lived to be his companion.

But this was not to be—and the girl soon after died. She expired in the arms of Elinor—quiet, gentle, as she lived—thankful, that she died not among strangers—and expressing by signs, rather than words, a gratitude for the most trifling services, the common offices of humanity. She died uncomplaining; and this young maid, this untaught Rosamund, might have given a lesson to the grave philosopher in death.

CHAPTER X.

I WAS but a boy when these events took place. All the village remember the story, and tell of Rosamund Gray, and old blind Margaret.

I parted from Allan Clare on that disastrous night, and set out for Edinburgh the next morning, before the facts were commonly known—I heard not of them—and it was four months before I received a letter from Allan.

"His heart," he told me, "was gone from him—for his sister had died of a frenzy fever!"—not a word of Rosamund in the letter—I was left to collect her story from sources which may one day be explained.

I soon after quitted Scotland, on the death of my father, and returned to my native village. Allan had left the place, and I could gain no information, whether he were dead or living.

I passed the *cottage*. I did not dare to look that way, or to enquire *who* lived there. A little dog, that had been Rosamund's, was yelping in my path. I laughed aloud like one mad, whose mind had suddenly gone from him—I stared vacantly around me, like one alienated from common perceptions.

But I was young at that time, and the impression became gradually weakened, as I mingled in the business of life. It is now *ten years* since these events took place, and I sometimes think of them as unreal. Allan Clare was a dear friend to me—but there are times, when Allan and his sister, Margaret and her grand-daughter, appear like personages of a dream—an idle dream.

CHAPTER XI.

STRANGE things have happened unto me—I seem scarce awake—but I will recollect my thoughts, and try to give an account of what has befallen me in the few last weeks.

Since my father's death our family has resided in London. I am in practice as a surgeon there. My mother died two years after we left Widford.

A month or two ago, I had been busying myself in drawing up the above narrative, intending to make it public. The employment had forced my mind to dwell upon *facts*, which had begun to fade from it—the memory of old times became vivid, and more vivid—I felt a strong desire to revisit the scenes of my native village—of the young loves of Rosamund and her Clare.

A kind of dread had hitherto kept me back; but I was restless now, till I had accomplished my wish. I set out one morning to walk—I reached Widford about eleven in the forenoon—after a slight breakfast at my Inn—where I was mortified to perceive, the old landlord did not know me again—(old Thomas Billet—he has often made angle rods for me when a child)—I rambled over all my accustomed haunts.

Our old house was vacant, and to be sold. I entered, unmolested, into the room that had been my bedchamber. I kneeled down on the spot where my little bed had stood—I felt like a child—I prayed like one—it seemed as though old times were to return again—I looked round involuntarily, expecting to see some face I knew—but all was naked and mute. The bed was gone. My little pane of painted window, through which I loved to look at the sun,

when I awoke in a fine summer's morning, was taken out, and had been replaced by one of common glass.

I visited, by turns, every chamber—they were all desolate and unfurnished, one excepted, in which the owner had left a harpsichord, probably to be sold—I touched the keys—I played some old Scottish tunes, which had delighted me when a child. Past associations revived with the music—blended with a sense of *unreality*, which at last became too powerful—I rushed out of the room to give vent to my feelings.

I wandered, scarce knowing where, into an old wood, that stands at the back of the house—we called it the *Wilderness*. A well-known *form* was missing, that used to meet me in this place—it was thine—Ben Moxam—the kindest, gentlest, politest of human beings, yet was he nothing higher than a gardener in the family. Honest creature, thou didst never pass me in my childish rambles, without a soft speech, and a smile. I remember thy good-natured face. But there is one thing, for which I can never forgive thee, Ben Moxam—that thou didst join with an old maiden aunt of mine in a cruel plot, to lop away the hanging branches of the old fir-trees—I remember them sweeping to the ground.

I have often left my childish sports to ramble in this place—its glooms and its solitude had a mysterious charm for my young mind, nurturing within me that love of quietness and lonely thinking, which have accompanied me to maturer years.

In this *Wilderness* I found myself after a ten years' absence. Its stately fir trees were yet standing, with all their luxuriant company of underwood—the squirrel was there, and the melancholy cooings of the wood-pigeon—all was as I had left it—my heart softened at the sight—it seemed, as though my

character had been suffering a *change*, since I forsook these shades.

My parents were both dead—I had no counsellor left, no experience of age to direct me, no sweet voice of reproof. The LORD had taken away my *friends*, and I knew not where he had laid them. I paced round the wilderness, seeking a comforter. I prayed, that I might be restored to that *state of innocence*, in which I had wandered in those shades.

Methought, my request was heard—for it seemed as though the stains of manhood were passing from me, and I were relapsing into the purity and simplicity of childhood. I was content to have been moulded into a perfect child. I stood still, as in a trance. I dreamed that I was enjoying a personal intercourse with my heavenly Father—and, extravagantly, put off the shoes from my feet—for the place where I stood, I thought, was holy ground.

This state of mind could not last long—and I returned with languid feelings to my Inn. I ordered my dinner—green peas and a sweetbread—it had been a favourite dish with me in my childhood—I was allowed to have it on my birthdays. I was impatient to see it come upon table—but, when it came, I could scarce eat a mouthful—my tears choked me. I called for wine—I drank a pint and a half of red wine—and not till then had I dared to visit the church-yard, where my parents were interred.

The *cottage* lay in my way—Margaret had chosen it for that very reason, to be near the church—for the old lady was regular in her attendance on public worship—I passed on—and in a moment found myself among the tombs.

I had been present at my father's burial, and knew the spot again—my mother's funeral I was prevented by illness from attending—a plain stone was placed

over the grave, with their initials carved upon it—for they both occupied one grave.

I prostrated myself before the spot—I kissed the earth that covered them—I contemplated, with gloomy delight, the time when I should mingle my dust with theirs—and kneeled, with my arms incumbent on the grave-stone, in a kind of mental prayer—for I could not speak.

Having performed these duties, I arose with quieter feelings, and felt leisure to attend to indifferent objects.—Still I continued in the church-yard, reading the various inscriptions, and moralising on them with that kind of levity, which will not unfrequently spring up in the mind, in the midst of deep melancholy.

I read of nothing but careful parents, loving husbands, and dutiful children. I said jestingly, where be all the *bad* people buried? Bad parents, bad husbands, bad children—what cemeteries are appointed for these?—do they not sleep in consecrated ground? or is it but a pious fiction, a generous oversight, in the survivors, which thus tricks out men's epitaphs when dead, who, in their life-time, discharged the offices of life, perhaps, but lamely? —Their failings, with their reproaches, now sleep with them in the grave. *Man wars not with the dead.* It is a *trait* of human nature, for which I love it.

I had not observed, till now, a little group assembled at the other end of the church-yard; it was a company of children, who were gathered round a young man, dressed in black, sitting on a grave-stone.

He seemed to be asking them questions—probably, about their learning—and one little dirty ragged-headed fellow was clambering up his knees to kiss him.—The children had been eating black cherries—for some of the stones were scattered about, and their mouths were smeared with them.

As I drew near them, I thought I discerned in the stranger a mild benignity of countenance, which I had somewhere seen before—I gazed at him more attentively——

It was Allan Clare! sitting on the grave of his sister.

I threw my arms about his neck. I exclaimed "Allan"—he turned his eyes upon me—he knew me—we both wept aloud—it seemed, as though the interval, since we parted, had been as nothing—I cried out, "come, and tell me about these things."

I drew him away from his little friends—he parted with a show of reluctance from the church-yard—Margaret and her granddaughter lay buried there, as well as his sister—I took him to my Inn—secured a room, where we might be private—ordered fresh wine—scarce knowing what I did, I danced for joy.

Allan was quite overcome, and taking me by the hand he said, "this repays me for all."

It was a proud day for me—I had found the friend I thought dead—earth seemed to me no longer valuable, than as it contained *him;* and existence a blessing no longer than while I should live to be his comforter.

I began, at leisure, to survey him with more attention. Time and grief had left few traces of that fine *enthusiasm*, which once burned in his countenance—his eyes had lost their original fire, but they retained an uncommon sweetness and, whenever they were turned upon me, their smile pierced to my heart.

"Allan, I fear you have been a sufferer." He replied not, and I could not press him further. I could not call the dead to life again.

So we drank, and told old stories—and repeated old poetry—and sang old songs—as if nothing had happened.—We sat till very late.—I forgot that I

had purposed returning to town that evening—to Allan all places were alike—I grew noisy, he grew cheerful—Allan's old manners, old enthusiasm, were returning upon him—we laughed, we wept, we mingled our tears, and talked extravagantly.

Allan was my chamber-fellow that night—and lay awake, planning schemes of living together under the same roof, entering upon similar pursuits;—and praising GOD, that we had met.

I was obliged to return to town the next morning, and Allan proposed to accompany me.—"Since the death of his sister," he told me, "he had been a wanderer."

In the course of our walk he unbosomed himself without reserve—told me many particulars of his way of life for the last nine or ten years, which I do not feel myself at liberty to divulge.

Once, on my attempting to cheer him, when I perceived him overthoughtful, he replied to me in these words:—

"Do not regard me as unhappy, when you catch me in these moods. I am never more happy than at times, when, by the cast of my countenance, men judge me most miserable.

"My friend, the events, which have left this sadness behind them, are of no recent date. The melancholy, which comes over me with the recollection of them, is not hurtful, but only tends to soften and tranquillise my mind, to detach me from the restlessness of human pursuits.

"The stronger I feel this detachment, the more I find myself drawn heavenward to the contemplation of spiritual objects.

"I love to keep old friendships alive and warm within me, because I expect a renewal of them in the *World of Spirits*.

"I am a wandering and unconnected thing on the

earth. I have made no new friendships, that can compensate me for the loss of the old—and the more I know mankind, the more does it become necessary for me to supply their loss by little images, recollections, and circumstances, of past pleasures.

"I am sensible that I am surrounded by a multitude of very worthy people, plain-hearted souls, sincere, and kind.—But they have hitherto eluded my pursuit, and will continue to bless the little circle of their families and friends, while I must remain a stranger to them.

"Kept at a distance by mankind, I have not ceased to love them—and could I find the cruel persecutor, the malignant instrument of GOD's judgments on me and mine, I think I would forgive, and try to love him too.

"I have been a quiet sufferer. From the beginning of my calamities it was given to me, not to see the hand of man in them. I perceived a mighty arm, which none but myself could see, extended over me. I gave my heart to the Purifier, and my will to the Sovereign Will of the Universe. The irresistible wheels of destiny passed on in their everlasting rotation,—and I suffered myself to be carried along with them without complaining."

CHAPTER XII.

ALLAN told me, that for some years past, feeling himself disengaged from every personal tie, but not alienated from human sympathies, it had been his taste, his *humour* he called it, to spend a great portion of his time in *hospitals* and *lazar-houses*.

He had found a *wayward pleasure*, he refused to name it a virtue, in tending a description of people, who had long ceased to expect kindness or friendliness from mankind, but were content to accept the reluctant services, which the often-times unfeeling instruments and servants of these well-meant institutions deal out to the poor sick people under their care.

It is not medicine, it is not broths and coarse meats, served up at a stated hour with all the hard formalities of a prison,—it is not the scanty dole of a bed to die on—which dying man requires from his species.

Looks, attentions, consolations,—in a word, *sympathies*, are what a man most needs in this awful close of mortal sufferings. A kind look, a smile, a drop of cold water to the parched lip—for these things a man shall bless you in death.

And these better things than cordials did Allan love to administer—to stay by a bedside the whole day, when something disgusting in a patient's distemper has kept the very nurses at a distance—to sit by, while the poor wretch got a little sleep—and be there to smile upon him when he awoke—to slip a guinea, now and then, into the hands of a nurse or attendant—these things have been to Allan as *privileges*, for which he was content to live, choice marks, and circumstances, of his Maker's goodness to him.

And I do not know whether occupations of this kind be not a spring of purer and nobler delight (certainly instances of a more disinterested virtue) than arises from what are called Friendships of Sentiment.

Between two persons of liberal education, like opinions, and common feelings, oftentimes subsists a Vanity of Sentiment, which disposes each to look upon the other as the only being in the universe worthy of friendship, or capable of understanding it,—themselves they consider as the solitary receptacles of all that is delicate in feeling, or stable in attachment:—when the odds are, that under every green hill, and in every crowded street, people of equal worth are to be found, who do more good in their generation, and make less noise in the doing of it.

It was in consequence of these benevolent propensities, I have been describing, that Allan oftentimes discovered considerable inclinations in favour of my way of life, which I have before mentioned as being that of a surgeon. He would frequently attend me on my visits to patients; and I began to think, that he had serious intentions of making my profession his study.

He was present with me at a scene—a *death-bed scene*—I shudder when I do but think of it.

CHAPTER XIII.

I WAS sent for the other morning to the assistance of a gentleman, who had been wounded in a duel,—and his wounds by unskilful treatment had been brought to a dangerous crisis.

The uncommonness of the name, which was *Matravis*, suggested to me, that this might possibly be no other than Allan's old enemy. Under this apprehension, I did what I could to dissuade Allan from accompanying me—but he seemed bent upon going, and even pleased himself with the notion, that it might lie within his ability to do the unhappy man some service. So he went with me.

When we came to the house, which was in Soho-Square, we discovered that it was indeed the man—the identical Matravis, who had done all that mischief in times past—but not in a condition to excite any other sensation than pity in a heart more hard than Allan's.

Intense pain had brought on a delirium—we perceived this on first entering the room—for the wretched man was raving to himself—talking idly in mad unconnected sentences,—that yet seemed, at times, to have a reference to *past facts*.

One while he told us his dream. "He had lost his way on a great heath, to which there seemed no end—it was cold, cold, cold—and dark, very dark—an old woman in leading-strings, *blind*, was groping about for a guide"—and then he frightened me,—for he seemed disposed to be *jocular*, and sang a song about "an old woman clothed in grey," and said "he did not believe in a devil."

Presently he bid us "not tell Allan Clare."—

Allan was hanging over him at that very moment, sobbing.—I could not resist the impulse, but cried out, "*this* is Allan Clare—Allan Clare is come to see you, my dear Sir."—The wretched man did not hear me, I believe, for he turned his head away, and began talking of *charnel houses*, and *dead men*, and "whether they knew any thing that passed in their coffins."

Matravis died that night.

POEMS

DEDICATION [1]

TO S. T. COLERIDGE, ESQ.

MY DEAR COLERIDGE,—You will smile to see the slender labors of your friend designated by the title of *Works;* but such was the wish of the gentlemen who have kindly undertaken the trouble of collecting them, and from their judgment could be no appeal.

It would be a kind of disloyalty to offer to any one but yourself a volume containing the *early pieces*, which were first published among your poems, and were fairly derivatives from you and them. My friend Lloyd and myself came into our first battle (authorship is a sort of warfare) under cover of the greater Ajax. How this association, which shall always be a dear and proud recollection to me, came to be broken,—who snapped the three-fold cord,—whether yourself (but I know that was not the case) grew ashamed of your former companions,—or whether (which is by much the more probable) some ungracious bookseller was author of the separation,—I cannot tell;—but wanting the support of your friendly elm, (I speak for myself,) my vine has, since that time, put forth few or no fruits; the sap (if ever it had any) has become, in a manner, dried up and extinct; and you will find your old associate, in his second volume, dwindled into prose and *criticism*.

Am I right in assuming this as the cause? or is it that, as years come upon us, (except with some more healthy-happy spirits,) Life itself loses much of its

[1] Prefixed to the Author's works published in 1818

Poetry for us? we transcribe but what we read in the great volume of Nature; and, as the characters grow dim, we turn off, and look another way. You yourself write no Christabels, nor Ancient Mariners, now.

Some of the Sonnets, which shall be carelessly turned over by the general reader, may happily awaken in you remembrances, which I should be sorry should be ever totally extinct—the memory

> Of summer days and of delightful years—

even so far back as to those old suppers at our old ********** Inn,—when life was fresh, and topics exhaustless,—and you first kindled in me, if not the power, yet the love of poetry, and beauty, and kindliness.—

> What words have I heard
> Spoke at the Mermaid!

The world has given you many a shrewd nip and gird since that time, but either my eyes are grown dimmer, or my old friend is the *same*, who stood before me three and twenty years ago—his hair a little confessing the hand of time, but still shrouding the same capacious brain,—his heart not altered, scarcely where it "alteration finds."

One piece, Coleridge, I have ventured to publish in its original form, though I have heard you complain of a certain over-imitation of the antique in the style. If I could see any way of getting rid of the objection, without re-writing it entirely, I would make some sacrifices. But when I wrote John Woodvil, I never proposed to myself any distinct deviation from common English. I had been newly initiated in the writings of our elder dramatists: Beaumont and Fletcher, and Massinger, were then a *first love;* and from what I was so freshly conversant

in, what wonder if my language imperceptibly took a tinge? The very *time*, which I had chosen for my story, that which immediately followed the Restoration, seemed to require, in an English play, that the English should be of rather an older cast, than that of the precise year in which it happened to be written. I wish it had not some faults, which I can less vindicate than the language.

I remain,
My dear Coleridge,
Your's,
With unabated esteem,
C. LAMB.

TO THE PUBLISHER[1]

DEAR Moxon,—I do not know to whom a Dedication of these Trifles is more properly due than to yourself. You suggested the printing of them. You were desirous of exhibiting a specimen of the *manner* in which Publications, entrusted to your future care, would appear. With more propriety, perhaps, the "Christmas," or some other of your own simple, unpretending Compositions, might have served this purpose. But I forget—you have bid a long adieu to the Muses. I had on my hands sundry Copies of Verses written for *Albums*—

> Those books kept by modern young Ladies for show,
> Of which their plain Grandmothers nothing did know—

or otherwise floating about in Periodicals; which you have chosen in this manner to embody. I feel little interest in their publication. They are simply—*Advertisement Verses.*

It is not for me, nor you, to allude in public to the kindness of our honoured Friend, under whose auspices you are become a Publisher. May that fine-minded Veteran in Verse enjoy life long enough to see his patronage justified! I venture to predict that your habits of industry, and your cheerful spirit, will carry you through the world.

I am, Dear Moxon,

Your Friend and sincere Well-Wisher,

CHARLES LAMB.

ENFIELD, *1st June*, 1830.

[1] Prefixed to the Author's Album Verses published in 1830.

SONNETS

I.

TO MRS. SIDDONS.

As when a child on some long winter's night
Affrighted clinging to its Grandam's knees
With eager wondring and perturb'd delight
Listens strange tales of fearful dark decrees
Mutter'd to wretch by necromantic spell;
Or of those hags, who at the witching time
Of murky midnight ride the air sublime,
And mingle foul embrace with fiends of Hell:
Cold Horror drinks its blood! Anon the tear
More gentle starts, to hear the Beldame tell
Of pretty babes, that lov'd each other dear,
Murder'd by cruel Uncle's mandate fell:
Ev'n such the shiv'ring joys thy tones impart,
Ev'n so thou, Siddons! meltest my sad heart!

1794.

II.

O! I could laugh to hear the midnight wind,
That, rushing on its way with careless sweep,
Scatters the ocean waves. And I could weep
Like to a child. For now to my raised mind
On wings of winds comes wild-eyed Phantasy
And her rude visions give severe delight.
O wingèd bark! how swift along the night
Pass'd thy proud keel! nor shall I let go by
Lightly of that drear hour the memory,
When wet and chilly on thy deck I stood,
Unbonneted, and gazed upon the flood,
Even till it seemed a pleasant thing to die.—
To be resolv'd into th' elemental wave,
Or take my portion with the winds that rave.

1794.

III.

METHINKS how dainty sweet it were, reclin'd
Beneath the vast out-stretching branches high
Of some old wood, in careless sort to lie,
Nor of the busier scenes we left behind
Aught envying. And, O Anna! mild-eyed maid!
Beloved! I were well content to play
With thy free tresses all a Summer's day,
Losing the time beneath the greenwood shade.
Or we might sit and tell some tender tale
Of faithful vows repaid by cruel scorn,
A tale of true love, or of friend forgot;
And I would teach thee, lady, how to rail
In gentle sort, on those who practise not
Or love or pity, though of woman born.

1795.

IV.

A TIMID grace sits trembling in her eye,
As loth to meet the rudeness of men's sight,
Yet shedding a delicious lunar light,
That steeps in kind oblivious ecstasy
The care-crazed mind, like some still melody:
Speaking most plain the thoughts which do possess
Her gentle sprite: peace, and meek quietness,
And innocent loves, and maiden purity:
A look whereof might heal the cruel smart
Of changed friends, or Fortune's wrongs unkind:
Might to sweet deeds of mercy move the heart
Of him who hates his brethren of mankind.
Turned are those lights from me, who fondly yet
Past joys, vain loves, and buried hopes regret.

1795.

v.

We were two pretty babes, the youngest she,
The youngest, and the loveliest far, I ween,
And Innocence her name. The time has been,
We two did love each other's company;
Time was, we two had wept to have been apart.
But when by show of seeming good beguil'd,
I left the garb and manners of a child,
And my first love for man's society,
Defiling with the world my virgin heart—
My loved companion dropped a tear, and fled,
And hid in deepest shades her awful head.
Beloved, who shall tell me where thou art—
In what delicious Eden to be found—
That I may seek thee the wide world around!

1795.

vi.

The Lord of Life shakes off his drowsihed,
And 'gins to sprinkle on the earth below
Those rays that from his shaken locks do flow;
Meantime, by truant love of rambling led,
I turn my back on thy detested walls,
Proud City! and thy sons, I leave behind,
A sordid, selfish, money-getting kind;
Brute things, who shut their ears when Freedom calls.

I pass not thee so lightly, well-known spire,
That minded me of many a pleasure gone,
Of merrier days, of love and Islington;
Kindling afresh the flames of past desire.
And I shall muse on thee, slow journeying on
To the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.

1795.

VII.

When last I roved these winding wood-walks green,
Green winding walks, and shady pathways sweet,
Oft-times would Anna seek the silent scene,
Shrouding her beauties in the lone retreat.
No more I hear her footsteps in the shade :
Her image only in these pleasant ways
Meets me self-wandering, where in happier days
I held free converse with the fair-hair'd maid.
I passed the little cottage which she loved,
The cottage which did once my all contain ;
It spake of days which ne'er must come again,
Spake to my heart, and much my heart was moved.
"Now fair befall thee, gentle maid!" said I,
And from the cottage turned me with a sigh.

1795.

VIII.

Was it some sweet device of Faery
That mocked my steps with many a lonely glade,
And fancied wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid ?
Have these things been ? or what rare witchery,
Impregning with delights the charmèd air,
Enlighted up the semblance of a smile
In those fine eyes ? methought they spake the while
Soft soothing things, which might enforce despair
To drop the murdering knife, and let go by
His foul resolve. And does the lonely glade
Still court the footsteps of the fair-hair'd maid ?
Still in her locks the gales of Summer sigh ?
While I forlorn do wander reckless where,
And 'mid my wanderings meet no Anna there.

1795.

IX.

If from my lips some angry accents fell,
Peevish complaint, or harsh reproof unkind,
'Twas but the error of a sickly mind
And troubled thoughts, clouding the purer well,
And waters clear, of Reason; and for me
Let this my verse the poor atonement be—
My verse, which thou to praise wert ever inclined
Too highly, and with a partial eye to see
No blemish. Thou to me didst ever show
Kindest affection; and would oft-times lend
An ear to the desponding love-sick lay,
Weeping my sorrows with me, who repay
But ill the mighty debt of love I owe,
Mary, to thee, my sister and my friend.

End of 1795.

THE GRANDAME.

On the green hill top,
Hard by the house of prayer, a modest roof,
And not distinguish'd from its neighbour-barn,
Save by a slender-tapering length of spire,
The Grandame sleeps. A plain stone barely tells
The name and date to the chance passenger.
For lowly born was she, and long had eat,
Well-earn'd, the bread of service:—hers was else
A mounting spirit, one that entertained
Scorn of base action, deed dishonourable,
Or aught unseemly. I remember well
Her reverend image: I remember, too,

With what a zeal she served her master's house;
And how the prattling tongue of garrulous age
Delighted to recount the oft-told tale
Or anecdote domestic. Wise she was,
And wondrous skill'd in genealogies,
And could in apt and voluble terms discourse
Of births, of titles, and alliances;
Of marriages, and intermarriages;
Relationship remote, or near of kin;
Of friends offended, family disgraced—
Maiden high-born, but wayward, disobeying
Parental strict injunction, and regardless
Of unmixed blood, and ancestry remote,
Stooping to wed with one of low degree.
But these are not thy praises; and I wrong
Thy honour'd memory, recording chiefly
Things light or trivial. Better 'twere to tell,
How with a nobler zeal, and warmer love,
She served her *heavenly Master*. I have seen
That reverend form bent down with age and pain,
And rankling malady. Yet not for this
Ceased she to praise her maker, or withdrew
Her trust in him, her faith, and humble hope—
So meekly had she learn'd to bear her cross—
For she had studied patience in the school
Of Christ, much comfort she had thence derived,
And was a follower of the NAZARENE.

Summer of 1796.

The Grandame

CHILDHOOD.

In my poor mind it is most sweet to muse
Upon the days gone by; to act in thought
Past seasons o'er, and be again a child;
To sit in fancy on the turf-clad slope,
Down which the child would roll; to pluck gay flowers,
Make posies in the sun, which the child's hand,
(Childhood offended soon, soon reconciled,)
Would throw away, and straight take up again,
Then fling them to the winds, and o'er the lawn
Bound with so playful and so light a foot,
That the press'd daisy scarce declined her head.

1796.

THE SABBATH BELLS.

The cheerful Sabbath bells, wherever heard,
Strike pleasant on the sense, most like the voice
Of one, who from the far-off hills proclaims
Tidings of good to Zion: chiefly when
Their piercing tones fall *sudden* on the ear
Of the contemplant, solitary man,
Whom thoughts abstruse or high have chanced to lure
Forth from the walks of men, revolving oft,
And oft again, hard matter, which eludes
And baffles his pursuit: thought-sick and tired
Of controversy, where no end appears,
No clue to his research, the lonely man
Half wishes for society again.
Him, thus engaged, the Sabbath bells salute
Sudden! his heart awakes, his ears drink in
The cheering music; his relenting soul
Yearns after all the joys of social life,
And softens with the love of human kind.

1796.

FANCY EMPLOYED ON DIVINE SUBJECTS.

THE truant Fancy was a wanderer ever,
A lone enthusiast maid. She loves to walk
In the bright visions of empyreal light,
By the green pastures, and the fragrant meads,
Where the perpetual flowers of Eden blow ;
By crystal streams, and by the living waters,
Along whose margin grows the wondrous tree
Whose leaves shall heal the nations ; underneath
Whose holy shade a refuge shall be found
From pain and want, and all the ills that wait
On mortal life, from sin and death for ever.

1796.

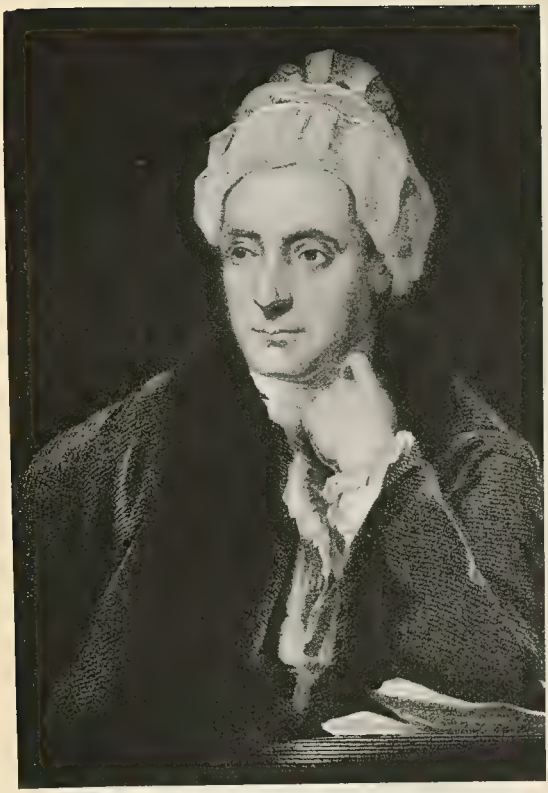
LINES

Addressed, from London, to SARA *and* S. T. C. *at Bristol, in the Summer of* 1796.

WAS it so hard a thing ? I did but ask
A fleeting holiday, a little week.

What, if the jaded steer, who, all day long,
Had borne the heat and burthen of the plough,
When ev'ning came, and her sweet cooling hour,
Should seek to wander in a neighbour copse,
Where greener herbage wav'd, or clearer streams
Invited him to slake his burning thirst ?
That man were crabbed who should say him nay ;
That man were churlish who should drive him thence.

A blessing light upon your heads,
Ye hospitable pair ! I may not come
To catch, on Clifden's heights, the summer gale ;
I may not come to taste the Avon wave ;



William Cowper, from an engraving by W. Holl.

Or, with mine eye intent on Redcliffe tow'rs,
To muse in tears on that mysterious youth,
Cruelly slighted, who, in evil hour,
Shap'd his advent'rous course to London walls!

Complaint, be gone! and, ominous thoughts, away!
Take up, my Song, take up a merrier strain;
For yet again, and lo! from Avon's vales,
Another Minstrel [1] cometh. Youth endear'd,
God and good Angels guide thee on thy road,
And gentler fortunes 'wait the friends I love!

1796.

TO THE POET COWPER ON HIS RECOVERY FROM AN INDISPOSITION.

WRITTEN SOME TIME BACK.

Cowper, I thank my God that thou art heal'd.
Thine was the sorest malady of all;
And I am sad to think that it should light
Upon the worthy head: but thou art heal'd,
And thou art yet, we trust, the destin'd man,
Born to re-animate the lyre, whose chords
Have slumber'd, and have idle lain so long;
To th' immortal sounding of whose strings
Did Milton frame the stately-pacèd verse;
Among whose wires with light finger playing
Our elder bard, Spenser, a gentle name,
The lady Muses' dearest darling child,
Enticed forth the deftest tunes yet heard
In hall or bower; taking the delicate ear
Of the brave Sidney and the Maiden Queen.
Thou, then, take up the mighty epic strain,
Cowper, of England's bards the wisest and the best!

Dec. 1, 1796.

[1] "From vales where Avon winds, the Minstrel came."
Coleridge's *Monody on Chatterton.*

A VISION OF REPENTANCE.

I SAW a famous fountain, in my dream,
Where shady path-ways to a valley led ;
A weeping willow lay upon that stream,
And all around the fountain brink were spread
Wide-branching trees, with dark green leaf rich clad,
Forming a doubtful twilight—desolate and sad.

The place was such, that whoso enter'd in,
Disrobèd was of every earthly thought,
And straight became as one that knew not sin,
Or to the world's first innocence was brought ;
Enseem'd it now, he stood on holy ground,
In sweet and tender melancholy wrapt around.

A most strange calm stole o'er my soothèd sprite ;
Long time I stood, and longer had I staid,
When lo ! I saw, saw by the sweet moon-light,
Which came in silence o'er that silent shade,
Where, near the fountain, SOMETHING like DESPAIR
Made, of that weeping willow, garlands for her hair.

And eke with painful fingers she inwove
Many an uncouth stem of savage thorn—
" The willow garland, *that* was for her love,
And *these* her bleeding temples would adorn."
With sighs her heart nigh burst, salt tears fast fell,
As mournfully she bended o'er that sacred well.

To whom when I addrest myself to speak,
She lifted up her eyes, and nothing said;
The delicate red came mantling o'er her cheek,
And, gath'ring up her loose attire, she fled
To the dark covert of that woody shade,
And in her goings seem'd a timid gentle maid.

Revolving in my mind what this should mean,
And why that lovely lady plainèd so;
Perplex'd in thought at that mysterious scene,
And doubting if 'twere best to stay or go,
I cast mine eyes in wistful gaze around,
When from the shades came slow a small and plaintive sound.

"PSYCHE am I, who love to dwell
In these brown shades, this woody dell,
Where never busy mortal came,
Till now, to pry upon my shame.

At thy feet what thou dost see
The waters of repentance be,
Which, night and day, I must augment
With tears, like a true penitent,

If haply so my day of grace
Be not yet past; and this lone place,
O'er-shadowy, dark, excludeth hence
All thoughts but grief and penitence."

"*Why dost thou weep, thou gentle maid!*
And wherefore in this barren shade
Thy hidden thoughts with sorrow feed?
Can thing so fair repentance need?"

"O I have done a deed of shame,
And tainted is my virgin fame,
And stain'd the beauteous maiden white
In which my bridal robes were dight."

"*And who the promised spouse? declare:*
And what those bridal garments were."

"Severe and saintly righteousness
Compos'd the clear white bridal dress;
JESUS, the Son of Heaven's high King,
Bought with his blood the marriage ring.

A wretched sinful creature, I
Deem'd lightly of that sacred tie,
Gave to a treacherous WORLD my heart,
And play'd the foolish wanton's part.

Soon to these murky shades I came,
To hide from the sun's light my shame.
And still I haunt this woody dell,
And bathe me in that healing well,
Whose waters clear have influence
From sin's foul stains the soul to cleanse;
And, night and day, I them augment
With tears, like a true penitent,
Until, due expiation made,
And fit atonement fully paid,
The Lord and Bridegroom me present,
Where in sweet strains of high consent,
God's throne before, the Seraphim
Shall chaunt the ecstatic marriage hymn."

"Now Christ restore thee soon"—I said,
And thenceforth all my dream was fled.

1796.

TO MARY LAMB.

FRIEND of my earliest years and childish days,
My joys, my sorrows, thou with me hast shar'd,
Companion dear, and we alike have far'd
(Poor pilgrims we) thro' life's unequal ways.
It were unwisely done, should we refuse
To cheer our path as featly as we may,
Our lonely path to cheer, as trav'llers use,
With merry song, quaint tale, or roundelay;
And we will sometimes talk past troubles o'er,
Of mercies shewn, and all our sickness heal'd,
And in his judgments God rememb'ring love;
And we will learn to praise God evermore,
For those glad tidings of great joy reveal'd
By that sooth Messenger sent from above.

1796.

THE TOMB OF DOUGLAS.

(SEE THE TRAGEDY OF THAT NAME.)

WHEN her son, her Douglas died,
To the steep rock's fearful side
Fast the frantic Mother hied—

O'er her blooming warrior dead
Many a tear did Scotland shed,
And shrieks of long and loud lament
From her Grampian Hills she sent.

Like one awakening from a trance,
She met the shock of Lochlin's[1] lance ;
On her rude invader foe
Return'd an hundred fold the blow,
Drove the taunting spoiler home ;
Mournful thence she took her way
To do observance at the tomb
Where the son of Douglas lay.

Round about the tomb did go
In solemn state and order slow,
Silent pace, and black attire,
Earl, or Knight, or good Esquire ;
Whoe'er by deeds of valour done
In battle had high honours won ;
Whoe'er in their pure veins could trace
The blood of Douglas' noble race.

[1] Denmark.

With them the flower of minstrels came,
And to their cunning harps did frame
In doleful numbers piercing rhymes,
Such strains as in the older times
Had sooth'd the spirit of Fingal,
Echoing thro' his father's hall.

"Scottish maidens, drop a tear
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier!
Brave youth, and comely 'bove compare,
All golden shone his burnish'd hair;
Valour and smiling courtesy
Play'd in the sun-beams of his eye.
Clos'd are those eyes that shone so fair,
And stain'd with blood his yellow hair.
Scottish maidens, drop a tear
O'er the beauteous Hero's bier!"

"Not a tear, I charge you, shed
For the false Glenalvon dead;
Unpitied let Glenalvon lie,
Foul stain to arms and chivalry!"

"Behind his back the traitor came,
And Douglas died without his fame.
Young light of Scotland early spent,
Thy country thee shall long lament;
And oft to after-times shall tell,
In Hope's sweet prime my Hero fell."

1796.

TO CHARLES LLOYD,

AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.

ALONE, obscure, without a friend,
A cheerless, solitary thing,
Why seeks my LLOYD the stranger out?
What off'ring can the stranger bring?

Of social scenes, home-bred delights,
That him in aught compensate may
For Stowey's pleasant winter nights,
For loves and friendships far away?

In brief oblivion to forego
Friends, such as thine, so justly dear,
And be awhile with me content
To stay, a kindly loiterer, here.

For this a gleam of random joy
Hath flush'd my unaccustomed cheek,
And, with an o'ercharg'd bursting heart,
I feel the thanks I cannot speak.

O! sweet are all the Muses' lays,
And sweet the charm of matin bird—
'Twas long, since these estranged ears
The sweeter voice of Friend had heard.

The voice hath spoke: the pleasant sounds
In memory's ear in after-time
Shall live, to sometimes rouse a tear,
And sometimes prompt an honest rhyme.

TO A YOUNG LADY

For when the transient charm is fled,
And when the little week is o'er,
To cheerless, friendless solitude
When I return, as heretofore—

Long, long, within my aching heart
The grateful sense shall cherish'd be ;
I'll think less meanly of myself,
That LLOYD will sometimes think on me.

January 1797.

TO A YOUNG LADY.

HARD is the heart that does not melt with ruth,
When care sits, cloudy, on the brow of youth ;
When bitter griefs the female bosom swell,
And Beauty meditates a fond farewell
To her lov'd native land, prepar'd to roam,
And seek in climes afar the peace denied at home.
The Muse, with glance prophetic, sees her stand
(Forsaken, silent lady) on the strand
Of farthest India, sick'ning at the roar
Of each dull wave, slow dash'd upon the shore ;
Sending, at intervals, an aching eye
O'er the wide waters, vainly, to espy
The long-expected bark, in which to find
Some tidings of a world she left behind.
At such a time shall start the gushing tear,
For scenes her childhood lov'd, now doubly dear.
At such a time shall frantic mem'ry wake
Pangs of remorse, for slighted England's sake ;
And for the sake of many a tender tie
Of love, or friendship, pass'd too lightly by.
Unwept, unhonour'd, 'midst an alien race,
And the *cold* looks of many a *stranger* face,
How will her poor heart bleed, and chide the day,
That from her country took her far away.

1797.

WRITTEN ON THE DAY OF MY AUNT'S FUNERAL.

Thou too art dead, ... ! very kind
Hast thou been to me in my childish days,
Thou best good creature. I have not forgot
How thou didst love thy Charles, when he was yet
A prating school-boy : I have not forgot
The busy joy on that important day,
When, child-like, the poor wanderer was content
To leave the bosom of parental love,
His childhood's play-place, and his early home,
For the rude fosterings of a stranger's hand,
Hard uncouth tasks, and school-boy's scanty fare.
How did thine eye peruse him round and round,
And hardly know him in his yellow coats,[1]
Red leathern belt, and gown of russet blue !
Farewell, good aunt !
Go thou, and occupy the same grave-bed
Where the dead mother lies.
Oh my dear mother, oh thou dear dead saint !
Where's now that placid face, where oft hath sat
A mother's smile, to think her son should thrive
In this bad world, when she was dead and gone ;
And where a tear hath sat (take shame, O son !)
When that same child has prov'd himself unkind.
One parent yet is left—a wretched thing,
A sad survivor of his buried wife,
A palsy-smitten, childish, old, old man,
A semblance most forlorn of what he was,
A merry cheerful man. A merrier man,
A man more apt to frame matter for mirth,
Mad jokes, and anticks for a Christmas eve ;
Making life social, and the laggard time
To move on nimbly, never yet did cheer
The little circle of domestic friends.

February 1797.

[1] The dress of Christ's Hospital

WRITTEN A YEAR AFTER THE EVENTS.

Alas! how am I chang'd! Where be the tears,
The sobs, and forc'd suspensions of the breath,
And all the dull desertions of the heart,
With which I hung o'er my dead mother's corse?
Where be the blest subsidings of the storm
Within, the sweet resignedness of hope
Drawn heavenward, and strength of filial love,
In which I bow'd me to my father's will?
My God, and my Redeemer! keep not thou
My soul in brute and sensual thanklessness
Seal'd up; oblivious ever of that dear grace,
And health restor'd to my long-loved friend,
Long-lov'd, and worthy known. Thou didst not leave
Her soul in death! O leave not now, my Lord,
Thy servants in far worse, in spiritual death!
And darkness blacker than those feared shadows
Of the valley all must tread. Lend us thy balms,
Thou dear Physician of the sin-sick soul,
And heal our cleansed bosoms of the wounds
With which the world has pierc'd us thro' and thro'.
Give us new flesh, new birth. Elect of heav'n
May we become; in thine election sure
Contain'd, and to one purpose stedfast drawn,
Our soul's salvation!
Thou, and I, dear friend,
With filial recognition sweet, shall know
One day the face of our dear mother in heaven;
And her remember'd looks of love shall greet
With looks of answering love; her placid smiles

Meet with a smile as placid, and her hand
With drops of fondness wet, nor fear repulse.
Be witness for me, Lord, I do not ask
Those days of vanity to return again,
(Nor fitting me to ask, nor thee to give).
Vain loves and wanderings with a fair-hair'd maid,
Child of the dust as I am, who so long
My captive heart steep'd in idolatry
And creature-loves. Forgive me, O my Maker!
If in a mood of grief I sin almost
In sometimes brooding on the days long past,
And from the grave of time wishing them back,
Days of a mother's fondness to her child,
Her little one.
O where be now those sports,
And infant play-games? where the joyous troops
Of children, and the haunts I did so love?
O my companions, O ye loved names
Of friend or playmate dear; gone are ye now;
Gone diverse ways; to honour and credit some,
And some, I fear, to ignominy and shame!
I only am left, with unavailing grief
To mourn one parent dead, and see one live
Of all life's joys bereft and desolate:
Am left with a few friends, and one, above
The rest, found faithful in a length of years,
Contented as I may, to bear me on
To the not unpeaceful evening of a day
Made black by morning storms!

September 1797.

WRITTEN SOON AFTER THE PRECEDING POEM.

Thou should'st have longer lived, and to the grave
Have peacefully gone down in full old age:
Thy children would have tended thy grey hairs.
We might have sat, as we have often done,
By our fireside and talked whole nights away,
Old times, old friends, and old events recalling,
With many a circumstance of trivial note,
To memory dear, and of importance grown.
How shall we tell them in a stranger's ear!

A wayward son, ofttimes I was to thee;
And yet in all our little bickerings,
Domestic jars, there was I know not what,
Of tender feeling, that were ill exchanged
For this world's chilling friendships, and their smiles
Familiar whom the heart calls stranger still.
A heavy lot hath he, most wretched man,
Who lives the last of all his family;
He looks around him, and his eye discerns
The face of the stranger; and his heart is sick.
Man of the world, what canst thou do for him?
Wealth is a burden which he could not bear,
Mirth a strange crime, the which he dares not act,
And generous wines no cordial to his soul.
For wounds like his, Christ is the only cure.
Go, preach thou to him of a world to come,
Where friends shall meet and know each other's face:
Say less than this, and say it to the winds.

October 1797.

TO CHARLES LLOYD.

A STRANGER, and alone, I pass those scenes
We past so late together ; and my heart
Felt something like desertion, as I look'd
Around me, and the well-known voice of friend
Was absent, and the cordial look was there
No more to smile on me. I thought on Lloyd ;
All he had been to me. And now I go
Again to mingle with a world impure,
With men who make a mock of holy things,
Mistaken, and on man's best hope think scorn.
The world does much to warp the heart of man,
And I may sometimes join its idiot laugh.
Of this I now complain not. Deal with me,
Omniscient Father ! as thou judgest best,
And in thy season *tender* thou my heart.
I pray not for myself ; I pray for him,
Whose soul is sore perplex'd : shine thou on him,
Father of lights ! and in the difficult paths
Make plain his way before him. His own thoughts
May he not think, his own ends not pursue ;
So shall he best perform thy will on earth.
Greatest and Best, thy will be ever ours !

August 1797.

COMPOSED AT MIDNIGHT.

From broken visions of perturbèd rest
I wake, and start, and fear to sleep again.
How total a privation of all sounds,
Sights, and familiar objects, man, bird, beast,
Herb, tree, or flower, and prodigal light of heaven,
'Twere some relief to catch the drowsy cry
Of the mechanic watchman, or the noise
Of revel reeling home from midnight cups.
Those are the moanings of the dying man,
Who lies in the upper chamber; restless moans,
And interrupted only by a cough
Consumptive, torturing the wasted lungs.
So in the bitterness of death he lies,
And waits in anguish for the morning's light.
What can that do for him, or what restore?
Short taste, faint sense, affecting notices,
And little images of pleasures past,
Of health, and active life—health not yet slain,
Nor the other grace of life, a good name, sold
For sin's black wages. On his tedious bed
He writhes, and turns him from the accusing light,
And finds no comfort in the sun, but says
"When night comes I shall get a little rest."
Some few groans more, death comes, and there an end.
'Tis darkness and conjecture all beyond;
Weak Nature fears, though Charity must hope,
And Fancy, most licentious on such themes
Where decent reverence well had kept her mute,
Hath o'er-stock'd hell with devils, and brought down
By her enormous fablings and mad lies,
Discredit on the Gospel's serious truths
And salutary fears. The man of parts,

Poet, or prose declaimer, on his couch
Lolling, like one indifferent, fabricates
A heaven of gold, where he, and such as he,
Their heads encompassèd with crowns, their heels
With fine wings garlanded, shall tread the stars
Beneath their feet, heaven's pavement, far removed
From damnèd spirits, and the torturing cries
Of men, his breth'ren, fashioned of the earth,
As he was, nourish'd with the self-same bread,
Belike his kindred or companions once—
Through everlasting ages now divorced,
In chains and savage torments to repent
Short years of folly on earth. Their groans unheard
In heav'n, the saint nor pity feels, nor care,
For those thus sentenced—pity might disturb
The delicate sense and most divine repose
Of spirits angelical. Blessed be God,
The measure of his judgments is not fixed
By man's erroneous standard. He discerns
No such inordinate difference and vast
Betwixt the sinner and the saint, to doom
Such disproportion'd fates. Compared with him,
No man on earth is holy called : they best
Stand in his sight approved, who at his feet
Their little crowns of virtue cast, and yield
To him of his own works the praise, his due.

1797

WRITTEN ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1797.

I AM a widow'd thing, now thou art gone!
Now thou art gone, my own familiar friend,
Companion, sister, help-mate, counsellor!
Alas! that honour'd mind, whose sweet reproof
And meekest wisdom in times past have smooth'd
The unfilial harshness of my foolish speech,
And made me loving to my parents old,
(Why is this so, ah, God! why is this so?)
That honour'd mind become a fearful blank,
Her senses lock'd up, and herself kept out
From human sight or converse, while so many
Of the foolish sort are left to roam at large,
Doing all acts of folly, and sin, and shame?
Thy paths are mystery!
Yet I will not think,
Sweet friend, but we shall one day meet, and live
In quietness, and die so, fearing God.
Or if *not*, and these false suggestions be
A fit of the weak nature, loth to part
With what it lov'd so long, and held so dear;
If thou art to be taken, and I left
(More sinning, yet unpunish'd, save in thee),
It is the will of God, and we are clay
In the potter's hands; and, at the worst, are made
From absolute nothing, vessels of disgrace,
Till, his most righteous purpose wrought in us,
Our purified spirits find their perfect rest.

LIVING WITHOUT GOD IN THE WORLD.

Mystery of God ! thou brave and beauteous world,
Made fair with light and shade and stars and flowers,
Made fearful and august with woods and rocks,
Jagg'd precipice, black mountain, sea in storms,
Sun, over all, that no co-rival owns,
But thro' Heaven's pavement rides as in despite
Or mockery of the littleness of man !
I see a mighty arm, by man unseen,
Resistless, not to be controul'd, that guides,
In solitude of unshared energies,
All these thy ceaseless miracles, O world !
Arm of the world, I view thee, and I muse
On Man, who trusting in his mortal strength,
Leans on a shadowy staff, a staff of dreams.
We consecrate our total hopes and fears
To idols, flesh and blood, our love, (heaven's due)
Our praise and admiration ; praise bestowed
By man on man, and acts of worship done
To a kindred nature, certes do reflect
Some portion of the glory and rays oblique
Upon the politic worshipper,—so man
Extracts a pride from his humility.
Some braver spirits of the modern stamp
Affect a Godhead nearer : these talk loud
Of mind, and independent intellect,
Of energies omnipotent in man,
And man of his own fate artificer ;
Yea of his own life Lord, and of the days
Of his abode on earth, when time shall be,
That life immortal shall become an art,
Or Death, by chymic practices deceived,

Forego the scent, which for six thousand years
Like a good hound he has followed, or at length
More manners learning, and a decent sense
And reverence of a philosophic world,
Relent, and leave to prey on carcasses.
But these are fancies of a few : the rest,
Atheists, or Deists only in the name,
By word or deed deny a God. They eat
Their daily bread, and draw the breath of heaven
Without or thought or thanks ; heaven's roof to them
Is but a painted ceiling hung with lamps,
No more, that lights them to their purposes.
They wander " loose about," they nothing see,
Themselves except, and creatures like themselves,
Short-liv'd, short-sighted, impotent to save.
So on their dissolute spirits, soon or late,
Destruction cometh, " like an armed man,"
Or like a dream of murder in the night,
Withering their mortal faculties, and breaking
The bones of all their pride.

1798.

THE OLD FAMILIAR FACES.

I HAVE had playmates, I have had companions,
In my days of childhood, in my joyful school-days,
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have been laughing, I have been carousing,
Drinking late, sitting late, with my bosom cronies,
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I loved a love once, fairest among women ;
Closed are her doors on me, I must not see her—
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

I have a friend, a kinder friend has no man ;
Like an ingrate, I left my friend abruptly ;
Left him, to muse on the old familiar faces.

Ghost-like I paced round the haunts of my child-
hood.
Earth seem'd a desert I was bound to traverse,
Seeking to find the old familiar faces.

Friend of my bosom, thou more than a brother,
Why wert not thou born in my father's dwelling ?
So might we talk of the old familiar faces—

How some they have died, and some they have left
me,
And some are taken from me ; all are departed ;
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

January 1798.

THE LOVER.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

> Fie upon 't.
> All men are false, I think. The date of love
> Is out, expired, its stories all grown stale,
> O'erpast, forgotten, like an antique tale
> Of Hero and Leander. *John Woodvil.*

All are not false. I knew a youth who died
For grief, because his love proved so,
And married with another.
I saw him on the wedding day,
For he was present in the church that day,
In festive bravery deck'd,
As one that came to grace the ceremony.
I mark'd him when the ring was given,
His countenance never changed;
And when the priest pronounced the marriage blessing,
He put a silent prayer up for the bride,
For so his moving lips interpreted.
He came invited to the marriage feast
With the bride's friends,
And was the merriest of them all that day:
But they, who knew him best, call'd it feign'd mirth;
And others said,
He wore a smile like death upon his face.
His presence dash'd all the beholders' mirth,
And he went away in tears.

What followed then?

Oh! then
He did not, as neglected suitors use,
Affect a life of solitude in shades,
But lived,
In free discourse and sweet society,
Among his friends who knew his gentle nature best.
Yet ever when he smiled,
There was a mystery legible in his face,
That whoso saw him said he was a man
Not long for this world.—

And true it was, for even then
The silent love was feeding at his heart
Of which he died :
Nor ever spake word of reproach,
Only he wish'd in death that his remains
Might find a poor grave in some spot not far
From his Mistress' family vault, "being the place
Where one day Anna should herself be laid."

1798.

WOODVIL IN BATTLE.

(A FRAGMENT.)

I saw him in the day of Worcester fight,
Whither he came at twice seven years,
Under the discipline of Lord Falkland,
(His uncle by the mother's side,
Who gave his youthful politics a bent
Quite *from* the principles of his father's house ;)
There did I see this valiant Lamb of Mars,
This sprig of honour, this unbearded John,
This veteran in green years, this sprout, this Woodvil,
(With dreadless ease guiding a fire-hot steed,
Which seemed to scorn the manage of a boy,)
Prick forth with such a *mirth* into the field,
To mingle rivalship and acts of war
Even with the sinewy masters of the art,—
You would have thought the work of blood had been
A play-game merely, and the rabid Mars
Had put his harmful hostile nature off,
To instruct raw youths in images of war,
And practice of the unedg'd player's foils.
The rough fanatic and blood-practised soldiery,
Seeing such hope and virtue in the boy,
Disclos'd their ranks to let him pass unhurt,
Checking their swords' uncivil injuries,
As loth to mar that curious workmanship
Of Valour's beauty portrayed in his face.

1798.

HELEN.

BY MARY LAMB.

High-born Helen, round your dwelling
These twenty years I've paced in vain :
Haughty beauty, thy lover's duty
Hath been to glory in his pain.

High-born Helen, proudly telling
Stories of thy cold disdain ;
I starve, I die, now you comply,
And I no longer can complain.

These twenty years I've lived on tears,
Dwelling for ever on a frown ;
On sighs I've fed, your scorn my bread ;
I perish now you kind have grown.

Can I, who loved my beloved
But for the scorn "was in her eye,"
Can I be moved for my beloved,
When she "returns me sigh for sigh ?"

In stately pride, by my bed-side,
High-born Helen's portrait's hung ;
Deaf to my praise, my mournful lays
Are nightly to the portrait sung.

To that I weep, nor ever sleep,
Complaining all night long to her—
Helen, grown old, no longer cold,
Said, "you to all men I prefer."

1800.

BALLAD.

FROM THE GERMAN.

THE clouds are blackening, the storms threatening,
And ever the forest maketh a moan :
Billows are breaking, the damsel's heart aching,
Thus by herself she singeth alone,
Weeping right plenteously.

"The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,
In this world plainly all seemeth amiss :
To thy breast, holy one, take now thy little one,
I have had earnest of all earth's bliss,
Living right lovingly."

Spring, 1800.

A BALLAD :

NOTING THE DIFFERENCE OF RICH AND POOR, IN THE WAYS OF A RICH NOBLE'S PALACE AND A POOR WORKHOUSE.

To the tune of the "Old and Young Courtier."

IN a costly palace Youth goes clad in gold ;
In a wretched workhouse Age's limbs are cold :
There they sit, the old men by a shivering fire,
Still close and closer cowering, warmth is their desire.

In a costly palace, when the brave gallants dine,
They have store of good venison, with old canary wine,
With singing and music to heighten the cheer ;
Coarse bits, with grudging, are the pauper's best fare.

A BALLAD

In a costly palace Youth is still carest
By a train of attendants which laugh at my young Lord's jest ;
In a wretched workhouse the contrary prevails :
Does Age begin to prattle ?—no man heark'neth to his tales.

In a costly palace if the child with a pin
Do but chance to prick a finger, strait the doctor is called in ;
In a wretched workhouse men are left to perish
For want of proper cordials, which their old age might cherish.

In a costly palace Youth enjoys his lust ;
In a wretched workhouse Age, in corners thrust,
Thinks upon the former days, when he was well to do,
Had children to stand by him, both friends and kinsmen too.

In a costly palace Youth his temples hides
With a new devised peruke that reaches to his sides ;
In a wretched workhouse Age's crown is bare,
With a few thin locks just to fence out the cold air.

In peace, as in war, 'tis our young gallants' pride,
To walk, each one i' the streets, with a rapier by his side,
That none to do them injury may have pretence ;
Wretched Age, in poverty, must brook offence.

August 1800.

HYPOCHONDRIACUS.

By myself walking,
To myself talking,
When as I ruminate
On my untoward fate,
Scarcely seem I
Alone sufficiently,
Black thoughts continually
Crowding my privacy;
They come unbidden,
Like foes at a wedding,
Thrusting their faces
In better guests' places,
Peevish and malecontent,
Clownish, impertinent,
Dashing the merriment;
So in like fashions
Dim cogitations
Follow and haunt me,
Striving to daunt me,
In my heart festering,
In my ears whispering,
"Thy friends are treacherous,
"Thy foes are dangerous,
"Thy dreams ominous."

Fierce Anthropophagi,
Spectra, Diaboli,
What scared St Anthony,
Hobgoblins, Lemures,
Dreams of Antipodes,
Night-riding Incubi

Troubling the fantasy,
All dire illusions
Causing confusions;
Figments heretical,
Scruples fantastical,
Doubts diabolical;
Abaddon vexeth me,
Mahu perplexeth me,
Lucifer teareth me ——

Jesu! Maria! liberate nos ab his diris tentationibus Inimici.

October 1800.

HESTER.

When maidens such as Hester die,
Their place ye may not well supply,
Though ye among a thousand try,
With vain endeavour.

A month or more hath she been dead,
Yet cannot I by force be led
To think upon the wormy bed,
And her together.

A springy motion in her gait,
A rising step, did indicate
Of pride and joy no common rate,
That flush'd her spirit.

I know not by what name beside
I shall it call:—if 'twas not pride,
It was a joy to that allied,
She did inherit.

Her parents held the Quaker rule,
Which doth the human feeling cool,
But she was train'd in Nature's school,
Nature had blest her.

A waking eye, a prying mind,
A heart that stirs, is hard to bind,
A hawk's keen sight ye cannot blind,
Ye could not Hester.

My sprightly neighbour, gone before
To that unknown and silent shore,
Shall we not meet, as heretofore,
Some Summer morning,

When from thy cheerful eyes a ray
Hath struck a bliss upon the day,
A bliss that would not go away,
A sweet fore-warning?

February 1803.

EPITAPH UPON A YOUNG LADY,

WHO LIVED NEGLECTED AND DIED OBSCURE.

UNDER this cold marble stone
Lie the sad remains of one
Who, when alive, by few or none
Was lov'd, as lov'd she might have been,
If she prosp'rous days had seen,
Or had thriving been, I ween.
Only this cold funereal stone
Tells, she was beloved by one,
Who on the marble graves his moan.

1803.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN A MOTHER AND CHILD.

BY MARY LAMB.

CHILD.

"O LADY, lay your costly robes aside,
No longer may you glory in your pride."

MOTHER.

Wherefore to-day art singing in mine ear
Sad songs, were made so long ago, my dear?
This day I am to be a bride, you know,
Why sing sad songs, were made so long ago?

CHILD.

O, mother, lay your costly robes aside,
For you may never be another's bride.
That line I learn'd not in the old sad song.

MOTHER.

I pray thee, pretty one, now hold thy tongue,
Play with the bride-maids, and be glad, my boy,
For thou shalt be a second father's joy.

CHILD.

One father fondled me upon his knee.
One father is enough, alone, for me.

1804.

Lines suggested by a Picture of Two Females by Lionardo da Vinci.

BY MARY LAMB.

The lady Blanch, regardless of all her lovers' fears,
To the Urs'line convent hastens, and long the Abbess hears:
"O Blanch, my child, repent ye of the courtly life ye lead."
Blanch looked on a rose-bud and little seem'd to heed.
She looked on the rose-bud, she looked round, and thought
On all her heart had whisper'd, and all the Nun had taught.
"I am worshipp'd by lovers, and brightly shines my fame,
"All Christendom resoundeth the noble Blanch's name.
"Nor shall I quickly wither like the rose-bud from the tree,
"My queen-like graces shining when my beauty's gone from me.
"But when the sculptur'd marble is raisèd o'er my head,
"And the matchless Blanch lies lifeless among the noble dead,
"This saintly lady Abbess hath made me justly fear,
"It nothing will avail me that I were worshipp'd here."

1804.

Lines on the same Picture being Removed to make place for a Portrait of a Lady by Titian.

BY MARY LAMB.

Who art thou, fair one, who usurp'st the place
Of Blanch, the lady of the matchless grace?
Come, fair and pretty, tell to me,
Who, in thy life-time, thou might'st be.
Thou pretty art and fair,
But with the lady Blanch thou never must compare.
No need for Blanch her history to tell;
Whoever saw her face, they there did read it well.
But when I look on thee, I only know
There lived a pretty maid some hundred years ago.

1805.

Lines on the celebrated Picture by Lionardo da Vinci, called the Virgin of the Rocks.

While young John runs to greet
The greater Infant's feet,
The Mother standing by, with trembling passion
Of devout admiration,
Beholds the engaging mystic play, and pretty adoration;
Nor knows as yet the full event
Of those so low beginnings,
From whence we date our winnings,
But wonders at the intent
Of those new rites, and what that strange child worship meant.
But at her side
An angel doth abide,
With such a perfect joy
As no dim doubts alloy,
An intuition,
A glory, an amenity,
Passing the dark condition
Of blind humanity,
As if he surely knew
All the blest wonders should ensue,
Or he had lately left the upper sphere,
And had read all the sovran schemes and divine riddles there.

1805.

ON THE SAME.

BY MARY LAMB.

Maternal lady with the virgin grace,
Heaven-born thy Jesus seemeth sure,
And thou a virgin pure.
Lady most perfect, when thy sinless face
Men look upon, they wish to be
A Catholic, Madonna fair, to worship thee.

1805

A FAREWELL TO TOBACCO.

May the Babylonish curse
Strait confound my stammering verse,
If I can a passage see
In this word-perplexity,
Or a fit expression find,
Or a language to my mind,
(Still the phrase is wide or scant)
To take leave of thee, GREAT PLANT!
Or in any terms relate
Half my love, or half my hate:
For I hate, yet love, thee so,
That, whichever thing I shew,
The plain truth will seem to be
A constrain'd hyperbole,
And the passion to proceed
More from a mistress than a weed.

Sooty retainer to the vine,
Bacchus' black servant, negro fine;
Sorcerer, that mak'st us dote upon
Thy begrimed complexion,
And, for thy pernicious sake,
More and greater oaths to break
Than reclaimed lovers take
'Gainst women: thou thy siege dost lay
Much too in the female way,
While thou suck'st the lab'ring breath
Faster than kisses or than death.

Thou in such a cloud dost bind us,
That our worst foes cannot find us,
And ill fortune, that would thwart us,
Shoots at rovers, shooting at us;

While each man, thro' thy height'ning steam,
Does like a smoking Etna seem,
And all about us does express
(Fancy and wit in richest dress)
A Sicilian fruitfulness.

Thou through such a mist dost show us,
That our best friends do not know us,
And, for those allowèd features,
Due to reasonable creatures,
Liken'st us to fell Chimeras
Monsters that, who see us, fear us;
Worse than Cerberus or Geryon,
Or, who first lov'd a cloud, Ixion.

Bacchus we know, and we allow
His tipsy rites. But what art thou,
That but by reflex can'st show
What his deity can do,
As the false Egyptian spell
Aped the true Hebrew miracle?
Some few vapours thou may'st raise.
The weak brain may serve to amaze,
But to the reins and nobler heart
Can'st nor life nor heat impart.

Brother of Bacchus, later born,
The old world was sure forlorn,
Wanting thee, that aidest more
The god's victories than before
All his panthers, and the brawls
Of his piping Bacchanals.
These, as stale, we disallow,
Or judge of *thee* meant: only thou
His true Indian conquest art;
And, for ivy round his dart,

The reformèd god now weaves
A finer thyrsus of thy leaves.

Scent to match thy rich perfume
Chemic art did ne'er presume
Through her quaint alembic strain,
None so sov'reign to the brain.
Nature, that did in thee excel,
Fram'd again no second smell.
Roses, violets, but toys
For the smaller sort of boys,
Or for greener damsels meant;
Thou art the only manly scent.

Stinking'st of the stinking kind,
Filth of the mouth and fog of the mind,
Africa, that brags her foison,
Breeds no such prodigious poison,
Henbane, nightshade, both together,
Hemlock, aconite——

Nay, rather,
Plant divine, of rarest virtue;
Blisters on the tongue would hurt you.
'Twas but in a sort I blamed thee;
None e'er prosper'd who defam'd thee;
Irony all, and feign'd abuse,
Such as perplext lovers use,
At a need, when, in despair
To paint forth their fairest fair,
Or in part but to express
That exceeding comeliness
Which their fancies doth so strike,
They borrow language of dislike;
And, instead of Dearest Miss,
Jewel, Honey, Sweetheart, Bliss,

And those forms of old admiring,
Call her Cockatrice and Siren,
Basilisk, and all that's evil,
Witch, Hyena, Mermaid, Devil,
Ethiop, Wench, and Blackamoor,
Monkey, Ape, and twenty more ;
Friendly Trait'ress, loving Foe,—
Not that she is truly so,
But no other way they know
A contentment to express,
Borders so upon excess,
That they do not rightly wot
Whether it be pain or not.

Or, as men, constrain'd to part
With what's nearest to their heart,
While their sorrow's at the height,
Lose discrimination quite,
And their hasty wrath let fall,
To appease their frantic gall,
On the darling thing whatever
Whence they feel it death to sever,
Though it be, as they, perforce,
Guiltless of the sad divorce.

For I must (nor let it grieve thee,
Friendliest of plants, that I must) leave thee.
For thy sake, TOBACCO, I
Would do any thing but die,
And but seek to extend my days
Long enough to sing thy praise.
But, as she, who once hath been
A king's consort, is a queen
Ever after, nor will bate
Any tittle of her state,
Though a widow, or divorced,
So I, from thy converse forced,

The old name and style retain,
A right Katherine of Spain ;
And a seat, too, 'mongst the joys
Of the blest Tobacco Boys ;
Where, though I, by sour physician,
Am debarr'd the full fruition
Of thy favours, I may catch
Some collateral sweets, and snatch
Sidelong odours, that give life
Like glances from a neighbour's wife ;
And still live in the by-places
And the suburbs of thy graces;
And in thy borders take delight,
An unconquer'd Canaanite.

1805.

THE APE.

An Ape is but a trivial beast,
Men count it light and vain ;
But I would let them have their thoughts,
To have my Ape again.

To love a beast in any sort,
Is no great sign of grace ;
But I have loved a flouting Ape's
'Bove any lady's face.

I have known the power of two fair eyes,
In smile, or else in glance,
And how (for I a lover was)
They make the spirits dance ;

But I would give two hundred smiles,
Of them that fairest be,
For one look of my staring Ape,
That used to stare on me.

THE APE

This beast, this Ape, it had a face—
If face it might be styl'd—
Sometimes it was a staring Ape,
Sometimes a beauteous child.

A Negro flat—a Pagod squat,
Cast in a Chinese mould—
And then it was a Cherub's face,
Made of the beaten gold !

But TIME, that's meddling, meddling still
And always altering things—
And, what's already at the best,
To alteration brings—

That turns the sweetest buds to flowers,
And chops and changes toys—
That breaks up dreams, and parts old friends,
And still commutes our joys—

Has changed away my Ape at last,
And in its place convey'd,
Thinking therewith to cheat my sight,
A fresh and blooming maid !

And fair to sight is she—and still
Each day doth sightlier grow,
Upon the ruins of the Ape,
My ancient playfellow !

The tale of Sphinx, and Theban jests,
I true in me perceive ;
I suffer riddles ; death from dark
Enigmas I receive :

Whilst a hid being I pursue,
That lurks in a new shape,
My darling in herself I miss—
And, in my Ape, THE APE.

1806.

SALOME.

BY MARY LAMB.

Once on a charger there was laid,
And brought before a royal maid,
As price of attitude and grace,
A guiltless head, a holy face.

It was on Herod's natal day,
Who o'er Judæa's land held sway.
He married his own brother's wife,
Wicked Herodias. She the life
Of John the Baptist long had sought,
Because he openly had taught
That she a life unlawful led,
Having her husband's brother wed.

This was he, that saintly John,
Who in the wilderness alone
Abiding, did for clothing wear
A garment made of camel's hair;
Honey and locusts were his food,
And he was most severely good.
He preachèd penitence and tears,
And waking first the sinner's fears,
Prepared a path, made smooth a way,
For his diviner Master's day.

Herod kept in princely state
His birth-day. On his throne he sate,
After the feast, beholding her
Who danced with grace peculiar;
Fair Salome, who did excel
All in that land for dancing well.

The feastful monarch's heart was fired,
And whatso'er thing she desired,
Though half his kingdom it should be,
He in his pleasure swore that he
Would give the graceful Salome.
The damsel was Herodias' daughter:
She to the queen hastes, and besought her
To teach her what great gift to name.
Instructed by Herodias, came
The damsel back; to Herod said,
"Give me John the Baptist's head;
And in a charger let it be
Hither straightway brought to me."
Herod her suit would fain deny,
But for his oath's sake must comply.

When painters would by art express
Beauty in unloveliness,
Thee, Herodias' daughter, thee,
They fittest subject take to be.
They give thy form and features grace;
But ever in thy beauteous face
They show a steadfast cruel gaze,
An eye unpitying; and amaze
In all beholders deep they mark,
That thou betrayest not one spark
Of feeling for the ruthless deed,
That did thy praiseful dance succeed.
For on the head they make you look,
As if a sullen joy you took,
A cruel triumph, wicked pride,
That for your sport a saint had died.

1808.

SUMMER FRIENDS.

BY MARY LAMB.

THE Swallow is a summer bird ;
He in our chimnies, when the weather
Is fine and warm, may then be heard
Chirping his notes for weeks together.

Come there but one cold wintry day,
Away will fly our guest the Swallow :
And much like him we find the way
Which many a gay young friend will follow.

In dreary days of snow and frost,
Closer to Man will cling the Sparrow :
Old friends, although in life we're crost,
Their hearts to us will never narrow.

Give me the bird—give me the friend—
Will sing in frost—will love in sorrow—
Whate'er mischance today may send,
Will greet me with his sight tomorrow.

1809.

TO THORNTON LEIGH HUNT.

A CHILD.

Model of thy parent dear,
Serious infant worth a fear:
In thy unfaultering visage well
Picturing forth the son of Tell,
When on his forehead, firm and good,
Motionless mark, the apple stood;
Guileless traitor, rebel mild,
Convict unconscious, culprit-child!
Gates that close with iron roar
Have been to thee thy nursery door;
Chains that chink in cheerless cells
Have been thy rattles and thy bells;
Walls contrived for giant sin
Have hemmed thy faultless weakness in;
Near thy sinless bed black Guilt
Her discordant house hath built,
And filled it with her monstrous brood—
Sights, by thee not understood—
Sights of fear, and of distress,
That pass a harmless infant's guess!

But the clouds, that overcast
Thy young morning, may not last.
Soon shall arrive the rescuing hour,
That yields thee up to Nature's power.
Nature, that so late doth greet thee,
Shall in o'er-flowing measure meet thee.
She shall recompense with cost
For every lesson thou hast lost.

Then wandering up thy sire's lov'd hill,[1]
Thou shalt take thy airy fill
Of health and pastime. *Birds shall sing*
For thy delight each May morning.
Mid new-yean'd lambkins thou shalt play,
Hardly less a lamb than they.
Then thy prison's lengthened bound
Shall be the horizon skirting round.
And, while thou fillest thy lap with flowers,
To make amends for wintery hours,
The breeze, the sunshine, and the place,
Shall from thy tender brow efface
Each vestige of untimely care,
That sour restraint had graven there;
And on thy every look impress
A more excelling childishness.

So shall be thy days beguil'd,
THORNTON HUNT, my favourite child.

1814.

[1] Hampstead.

TO MISS KELLY.

You are not, Kelly, of the common strain,
That stoop their pride and female honour down
To please that many-headed beast, *the town*
And vend their lavish smiles and tricks for gain ;
By fortune thrown amid the actors' train,
You keep your native dignity of thought ;
The plaudits that attend you come unsought,
As tributes due unto your natural vein.
Your tears have passion in them, and a grace
Of genuine freshness, which our hearts avow ;
Your smiles are winds whose ways we cannot trace
That vanish and return we know not how—
And please the better from a pensive face,
A thoughtful eye, and a reflecting brow.

THE FAMILY NAME.

What reason first imposed thee, gentle name,
Name that my father bore, and his sire's sire,
Without reproach ? we trace our stream no higher ;
And I, a childless man, may end the same.
Perchance some shepherd on Lincolnian plains,
In manners guileless as his own sweet flocks,
Received thee first amid the merry mocks
And arch allusions of his fellow swains.
Perchance from Salem's holier fields returned,
With glory gotten on the heads abhorr'd
Of faithless Saracens, some martial lord
Took His meek title, in whose zeal he burn'd.
Whate'er the fount whence thy beginnings came,
No deed of mine shall shame thee, gentle name.

TO JOHN LAMB, ESQ., OF THE SOUTH-SEA HOUSE.

JOHN, you were figuring in the gay career
Of blooming manhood with a young man's joy,
When I was yet a little peevish boy—
Though time has made the difference disappear
Betwixt our ages, which *then* seemed so great—
And still by rightful custom you retain
Much of the old authoritative strain,
And keep the elder brother up in state.
O ! you do well in this ! 'Tis man's worst deed
To let the "things that have been" run to waste,
And in the unmeaning present sink the past :
In whose dim glass even now I faintly read
Old buried forms, and faces long ago,
Which you, and I, and one more, only know.

ON THE SIGHT OF SWANS IN KENSINGTON GARDEN.

QUEEN-BIRD that sittest on thy shining nest,
And thy young cygnets without sorrow hatchest,
And thou, thou other royal bird, that watchest
Lest the white mother wandering feet molest :
Shrined are your offspring in a crystal cradle,
Brighter than Helen's ere she yet had burst
Her shelly prison. They shall be born at first
Strong, active, graceful, perfect, swan-like, able
To tread the land or waters with security.
Unlike poor human births, conceived in sin,
In grief brought forth, both outwardly and in
Confessing weakness, error, and impurity.
Did heavenly creatures own succession's line,
The births of heaven like to your's would shine.

TO MARTIN CHARLES BURNEY.

(A DEDICATION.)

FORGIVE me, BURNEY, if to thee these late
And hasty products of a critic pen,
Thyself no common judge of books and men,
In feeling of thy worth I dedicate.
My *verse* was offered to an older friend;
The humbler *prose* has fallen to thy share:
Nor could I miss the occasion to declare,
What spoken in thy presence must offend—
That, set aside some few caprices wild,
Those humourous clouds that flit o'er brightest days,
In all my threadings of this worldly maze,
(And I have watch'd thee almost from a child),
Free from self-seeking, envy, low design,
I have not found a whiter soul than thine.

1818.

TO A CELEBRATED FEMALE PERFORMER IN THE "BLIND BOY."

RARE artist! who with half thy tools, or none,
Canst execute with ease thy curious art,
And press thy powerful'st meanings on the heart,
Unaided by the eye, expression's throne!
While each blind sense, intelligential grown
Beyond its sphere, performs the effect of sight:
Those orbs alone, wanting their proper might,
All motionless and silent seem to moan
The unseemly negligence of nature's hand,
That left them so forlorn. What praise is thine,
O mistress of the passions; artist fine!
Who dost our souls against our sense command,
Plucking the horror from a sightless face,
Lending to blank deformity a grace.

1819.

WORK.

Who first invented work, and bound the free
And holyday-rejoicing spirit down
To the ever-haunting importunity
Of business in the green fields, and the town—
To plough, loom, anvil, spade—and oh! most sad
To that dry drudgery at the desk's dead wood?
Who but the Being unblest, alien from good,
Sabbathless Satan! he who his unglad
Task ever plies 'mid rotatory burnings,
That round and round incalculably reel—
For wrath divine hath made him like a wheel—
In that red realm from which are no returnings;
Where toiling, and turmoiling, ever and aye
He, and his thoughts, keep pensive working-day.

1819.

WRITTEN AT CAMBRIDGE.

I was not train'd in Academic bowers,
And to those learned streams I nothing owe
Which copious from those twin fair founts do flow;
Mine have been any thing but studious hours.
Yet can I fancy, wandering 'mid thy towers,
Myself a nursling, Granta, of thy lap;
My brow seems tightening with the Doctor's cap,
And I walked *gowned;* feel unusual powers.
Strange forms of logic clothe my admiring speech,
Old Ramus' ghost is busy at my brain;
And my scull teems with notions infinite.
Be still, ye reeds of Camus, while I teach
Truths, which transcend the searching Schoolmen's vein,
And half had stagger'd that stout Stagirite!

1819.

SAINT CRISPIN TO MR GIFFORD.

All unadvised, and in an evil hour,
Lured by aspiring thoughts, my son, you daft
The lowly labours of the "Gentle Craft"
For learned toils, which blood and spirits sour.
All things, dear pledge, are not in all men's power;
The wiser sort of shrub affects the ground;
The sweet content of mind is oftener found
In cobbler's parlour, than in critic's bower.
The sorest work is what doth cross the grain;
And better to this hour you had been plying
The obsequious awl with well-waxed finger flying,
Than ceaseless thus to till a thankless vein:
Still teasing Muses, which are still denying;
Making a stretching-leather of your brain.

St Crispin's Eve.
1819.

SONNET TO MISS BURNEY,

ON HER CHARACTER OF BLANCH IN "COUNTRY NEIGHBOURS," A TALE.

Bright spirits have arisen to grace the Burney name,
And some in letters, some in tasteful arts,
In learning some have borne distinguished parts;
Or sought through science of sweet sounds their fame:
And foremost *she*, renowned for many a tale
Of faithful love perplexed, and of that good
Old man, who, as Camilla's guardian, stood
In obstinate virtue clad like coat of mail.
Nor dost thou, Sarah, with unequal pace
Her steps pursue. The pure romantic vein
No gentler creature ever knew to feign
Than thy fine Blanch, young with an elder grace,
In all respects without rebuke or blame
Answering the antique freshness of her name.

July 1820.

IN TABULAM EXIMII PICTORIS

B. HAYDONI, IN QUÂ SOLYMÆI, ADVENIENTE DOMINO, PALMAS IN VIÂ PROSTERNENTES MIRÂ ARTE DEPINGUNTUR.

QUID vult iste equitans? et quid velit ista virorum
Palmifera ingens turba, et vox tremebunda Hosanna?
Hosanna Christo semper semperque canamus.

Palma fuit *Senior* pictor celeberrimus olim;
Sed palmam cedat, modò si foret ille superstes,
Palma, *Haydone*, tibi: tu palmas omnibus aufers.

Palma negata macrum, donataque reddit opimum.
Si simul incipiat cum famâ increscere corpus,
Tu citò pinguesces, fies et, amicule, obesus.

Affectant lauros pictores atque poetæ.
Sin laurum invideant (sed quis tibi?) laurigerentes,
Pro lauro palmâ viridanti tempora cingas.

Carlagnulus.

1820.

TRANSLATION OF THE ABOVE.

WHAT rider's that? and who those myriads bringing
Him on his way with palms, Hosannas singing?
Hosanna to the Christ, Heav'n—Earth—should still be ringing.

In days of old, old Palma won renown:
But Palma's self must yield the painter's crown,
Haydon, to thee. Thy palms put every other down.

If Flaccus' sentence with the truth agree,
That "palms awarded make men plump to be,"
Friend Horace, Haydon soon in bulk shall match with thee.

Painters with poets for the laurel vie:
But should the laureat band thy claims deny,
Wear thou thine own green palm, Haydon, triumphantly.

1820.

B. W. Procter (Barry Cornwall), from the engraving by J. T. Wedgwood.

TO THE AUTHOR OF POEMS,

PUBLISHED UNDER THE NAME OF BARRY CORNWALL.

Let hate, or grosser heats, their foulness mask
Under the vizor of a borrow'd name ;
Let things eschew the light deserving blame :
No cause hast thou to blush for thy sweet task.
"Marcion Colonna" is a dainty book ;
And thy "Sicilian Tale" may boldly pass ;
Thy "Dream" 'bove all, in which, as in a glass,
On the great world's antique glories we may look.
No longer then, as "lowly substitute,
Factor, or Proctor, for another's gains,"
Suffer the admiring world to be deceived ;
Lest thou thyself, by self of fame bereaved,
Lament too late the lost prize of thy pains,
And heavenly tunes piped through an alien flute.

September 1820.

TO J. S. KNOWLES, ESQ.

ON HIS TRAGEDY OF VIRGINIUS.

Twelve years ago I knew thee, Knowles, and then
Esteemed you a perfect specimen
Of those fine spirits warm-soul'd Ireland sends,
To teach us colder English how a friend's
Quick pulse should beat. I knew you brave, and plain,
Strong-sensed, rough-witted, above fear or gain ;
But nothing further had the gift to espy.
Sudden you re-appear. With wonder I
Hear my old friend (turn'd Shakespeare) read a scene
Only to *his* inferior in the clean
Passes of pathos : with such fence-like art—
Ere we can see the steel, 'tis in our heart.

Almost without the aid language affords,
Your piece seems wrought. That huffing medium, *words*,
(Which in the modern Tamburlaines quite sway
Our shamed souls from their bias) in your play
We scarce attend to. Hastier passion draws
Our tears on credit : and we find the cause
Some two hours after, spelling o'er again
Those strange few words at ease, that wrought the pain.
Proceed, old friend ; and, as the year returns,
Still snatch some new old story from the urns
Of long-dead virtue. We, that knew before
Your worth, may admire, we cannot love you more.

September 1820.

TO MY FRIEND THE INDICATOR.

Your easy Essays indicate a flow,
Dear Friend, of brain, which we may elsewhere seek ;
And to their pages I, and hundreds, owe,
That Wednesday is the sweetest of the week.
Such observation, wit, and sense, are shown,
We think the days of Bickerstaff returned ;
And that a portion of that oil you own,
In his undying midnight lamp which burned.
I would not lightly bruise old Priscian's head,
Or wrong the rules of grammar understood ;
But, with the leave of Priscian be it said,
The *Indicative* is your *Potential Mood*,
Wit, poet, prose-man, party-man, translator—
H——, your best title yet is Indicator.

September 1820.

James Sheridan Knowles, from an engraving by W. Finden, after the drawing by T. Wageman.

LEISURE.

THEY talk of time, and of time's galling yoke,
That like a mill-stone on man's mind doth press,
Which only works and business can redress:
Of divine Leisure such foul lies are spoke,
Wounding her fair gifts with calumnious stroke.
But might I, fed with silent meditation,
Assoiled live from that fiend Occupation—
Improbus Labor, which my spirits hath broke—
I'd drink of Time's rich cup, and never surfeit:
Fling in more days than went to make the gem,
That crown'd the white top of Methusalem:
Yea on my weak neck take, and never forfeit,
Like Atlas bearing up the dainty sky,
The heaven-sweet burthen of eternity.

DEUS NOBIS HÆC OTIA FECIT.

April 1821.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "EVERY-DAY BOOK."

I LIKE you, and your book, ingenuous Hone!
In whose capacious all-embracing leaves
The very marrow of tradition's shown;
And all that history—much that fiction—weaves.

By every sort of taste your work is graced.
Vast stores of modern anecdote we find,
With good old story quaintly interlaced—
The theme as various as the reader's mind.

Rome's lie-fraught legends you so truly paint—
Yet kindly,—that the half-turn'd Catholic
Scarcely forbears to smile at his own saint,
And cannot curse the candid heretic.

Rags, relics, witches, ghosts, fiends, crowd your page ;
  Our fathers' mummeries we well-pleased behold,
And, proudly conscious of a purer age,
  Forgive some fopperies in the times of old.

Verse-honouring Phœbus, Father of bright *Days*,
  Must needs bestow on you both good and many,
Who, building trophies of his Children's praise,
  Run their rich Zodiac through, not missing any.

Dan Phœbus loves your book—trust me, friend Hone—
  The title only errs, he bids me say :
For while such art, wit, reading, there are shown,
  He swears, 'tis not a work of *every day*.

May 1825.

PINDARIC ODE TO THE TREAD-MILL.

I.

Inspire my spirit, Spirit of De Foe,
That sang the Pillory,
In loftier strains to show
A more sublime Machine
Than that, where thou wert seen,
With neck out-stretcht and shoulders ill awry,
Courting coarse plaudits from vile crowds below—
A most unseemly show !

II.

In such a place
Who could expose thy face,
Historiographer of deathless Crusoe !
That paint'st the strife
And all the naked ills of savage life,
Far above Rousseau ?
Rather myself had stood
In that ignoble wood,
Bare to the mob, on holyday or high day.
If nought else could atone
For waggish libel,
I swear on bible,
I would have spared him for thy sake alone,
Man Friday !

III.

Our ancestors' were sour days,
Great Master of Romance !
A milder doom had fallen to thy chance
In our days :
Thy sole assignment
Some solitary confinement,
(Not worth thy care a carrot,)
Where in world-hidden cell
Thou thy own Crusoe might have acted well,

Only without the parrot ;
By sure experience taught to know,
Whether the qualms thou mak'st him feel were truly such or no.

IV.

But stay ! methinks in statelier measure—
A more companionable pleasure—
I see thy steps the mighty Tread Mill trace,
(The subject of my song,
Delay'd however long,)
And some of thine own race,
To keep thee company, thou bring'st with thee along.
There with thee go,
Link'd in like sentence,
With regulated pace and footing slow,
Each old acquaintance,
Rogue—harlot—thief—that live to future ages ;
Through many a labour'd tome,
Rankly embalm'd in thy too natural pages.
Faith, friend De Foe, thou art quite at home !
Not one of thy great offspring thou dost lack,
From pirate Singleton to pilfering Jack.
Here Flandrian Moll her brazen incest brags ;
Vice-stript Roxana, penitent in rags,
There points to Amy, treading equal chimes,
The faithful handmaid to her faithless crimes.

V.

Incompetent my song to raise
To its just height thy praise,
Great Mill !
That by thy motion proper,
(No thanks to wind, or sail, or working rill)
Grinding that stubborn corn, the Human will,
Turn'st out men's consciences,

That were begrimed before, as clean and sweet
As flour from purest wheat,
Into thy hopper.
All reformation short of thee but nonsense is,
Or human, or divine.

VI.

Compared with thee,
What are the labours of that Jumping Sect,
Which feeble laws connive at rather than respect ?
Thou dost not bump,
Or jump,
But *walk* men into virtue ; betwixt crime
And slow repentance giving breathing time,
And leisure to be good ;
Instructing with discretion demi-reps
How to direct their steps.

VII.

Thou best Philosopher made out of wood !
Not that which framed the tub,
Where sate the Cynic cub,
With nothing in his bosom sympathetic ;
But from those groves derived, I deem,
Where Plato nursed his dream
Of immortality ;
Seeing that clearly
Thy system all is merely
Peripatetic.
Thou to thy pupils dost such lessons give
Of how to live
With temperance, sobriety, morality,
(A new art,)
That from thy school, by force of virtuous deeds,
Each Tyro now proceeds
A " Walking Stewart ! "

October 1825.

ANGEL HELP.[1]

This rare tablet doth include
Poverty with Sanctitude.
Past midnight this poor maid hath spun,
And yet the work is not half-done,
Which must supply from earnings scant
A feeble bed-rid parent's want.
Her sleep-charged eyes exemption ask,
And Holy hands take up the task ;
Unseen the rock and spindle ply,
And do her earthly drudgery.
Sleep, saintly poor one, sleep, sleep on ;
And, waking, find thy labours done.
Perchance she knows it by her dreams ;
Her eye hath caught the golden gleams,
Angelic presence testifying,
That round her every where are flying ;
Ostents from which she may presume,
That much of Heaven is in the room.
Skirting her own bright hair they run,
And to the sunny add more sun :
Now on that aged face they fix,
Streaming from the Crucifix ;
The flesh-clogg'd spirit disabusing,
Death-disarming sleeps infusing,
Prelibations, foretastes high,
And equal thoughts to live or die.
Gardener bright from Eden's bower,
Tend with care that lily flower ;
To its leaves and root infuse
Heaven's sunshine, Heaven's dews.

[1] Suggested by a drawing in the possession of Charles Aders, Esq., in which is represented the Legend of a poor female Saint ; who, having spun past midnight, to maintain a bed-rid mother, has fallen asleep from fatigue, and Angels are finishing her work. In another part of the chamber an angel is tending a lily, the emblem of purity.

INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN

'Tis a type, and 'tis a pledge,
Of a crowning privilege.
Careful as that lily flower,
This Maid must keep her precious dower;
Live a sainted Maid, or die
Martyr to virginity.

1827.

ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON AS BORN.

I saw where in the shroud did lurk
A curious frame of Nature's work.
A flow'ret crushed in the bud,
A nameless piece of Babyhood,
Was in her cradle-coffin lying;
Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying;
So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb
For darker closets of the tomb!
She did but ope an eye, and put
A clear beam forth, then straight up shut
For the long dark: ne'er more to see
Through glasses of mortality.
Riddle of destiny, who can show
What thy short visit meant, or know
What thy errand here below?
Shall we say, that Nature blind
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,
Just when she had exactly wrought
A finish'd pattern without fault?
Could she flag, or could she tire,
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd?
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure
Life of health, and days mature:
Woman's self in miniature!
Limbs so fair, they might supply

(Themselves now but cold imagery)
The sculptor to make Beauty by.
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry,
That babe, or mother, one must die;
So in mercy left the stock,
And cut the branch; to save the shock
Of young years widow'd; and the pain,
When Single State comes back again
To the lone man, who, 'reft of wife,
Thenceforward drags a maimed life?
The economy of Heaven is dark;
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,
Why Human Buds, like this, should fall,
More brief than fly ephemeral,
That has his day; while shrivel'd crones
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones;
And crabbed use the conscience sears
In sinners of an hundred years.
Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss.
Rites, which custom does impose,
Silver bells and baby clothes;
Coral redder than those lips,
Which pale death did late eclipse;
Music framed for infants' glee,
Whistle never tuned for thee;
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,
Loving hearts were they which gave them.
Let not one be missing; nurse,
See them laid upon the hearse
Of infant slain by doom perverse.
Why should kings and nobles have
Pictured trophies to their grave;
And we, churls, to thee deny
Thy pretty toys with thee to lie,
A more harmless vanity?

1827.

TO BERNARD BARTON.

WITH A COLOURED PRINT.[1]

When last you left your Woodbridge pretty,
To stare at sights, and see the City,
If I your meaning understood,
You wish'd a Picture, cheap, but good;
The colouring? decent; clear, not muddy;
To suit a Poet's quiet study,
Where Books and Prints for delectation
Hang, rather than vain ostentation.
The subject? what I pleased, if comely;
But something scriptural and homely:
A sober Piece, not gay or wanton,
For winter fire-sides to descant on;
The theme so scrupulously handled,
A Quaker might look on unscandal'd;
Such as might satisfy Ann Knight,
And classic Mitford just not fright.
Just such a one I've found, and send it;
If liked, I give—if not, but lend it.
The moral? nothing can be sounder.
The fable? 'tis its own expounder—
A Mother talking to her Chit
Some good book, and explaining it.
He, silly urchin, tired of lesson,
His learning lays no mighty stress on,
But seems to hear not what he hears;
Thrusting his fingers in his ears,
Like Obstinate, that perverse funny one,
In honest parable of Bunyan.
His working Sister, more sedate,
Listens; but in a kind of state,

[1] From the venerable and ancient Manufactory of Carrington Bowles: some of my readers may recognise it.

The painter meant for steadiness,
But has a tinge of sullenness;
And, at first sight, she seems to brook
As ill her needle, as he his book.
This is the Picture. For the Frame—
'Tis not ill-suited to the same;
Oak-carved, not gilt, for fear of falling;
Old-fashion'd; plain, yet not appalling;
And sober, as the Owner's Calling.

1827.

THE YOUNG CATECHIST.[1]

While this tawny Ethiop prayeth,
Painter, who is she that stayeth
By, with skin of whitest lustre,
Sunny locks, a shining cluster,
Saint-like seeming to direct him
To the Power that must protect him?
Is she of the Heaven-born Three,
Meek Hope, strong Faith, sweet Charity;
Or some Cherub?—
They you mention
Far transcend my weak invention.
'Tis a simple Christian child,
Missionary young and mild,
From her stock of Scriptural knowledge,
Bible-taught without a college,
Which by reading she could gather
Teaches him to say Our Father
To the common Parent, who
Colour not respects, nor hue.
White and black in him have part,
Who looks not to the skin, but heart.

1827.

[1] A picture by Henry Meyer, Esq.

TO EMMA, LEARNING LATIN, AND DESPONDING.

BY MARY LAMB.

Droop not, dear Emma, dry those falling tears,
And call up smiles into thy pallid face,
Pallid and care-worn with thy arduous race;
In few brief months thou hast done the work of years.
To young beginnings natural are these fears.
A right good scholar shalt thou one day be,
And that no distant one; when even she,
Who now to thee a star far off appears,
That most rare Latinist, the Northern Maid—
The language-loving Sarah[1] of the Lake—
Shall hail thee Sister Linguist. This will make
Thy friends, who now afford thee careful aid,
A recompense most rich for all their pains,
Counting thy acquisitions their best gains.

Enfield, August 22, 1827.

ON BEING ASKED TO WRITE IN MISS WESTWOOD'S ALBUM.

My feeble muse, that fain her best would
Write, at command of Frances Westwood,
But feel her wits not in their best mood,
Fell lately on some idle fancies.
As she's much given to romances,
About this self-same style of Frances:
Which seems to be a name in common
Attributed to man or woman.

[1] Daughter of S. T. Coleridge, Esq., an accomplished linguist in the Greek and Latin tongues, and translatress of a History of the Abipones.

She thence contrived this flattering moral,
With which she hopes no soul will quarrel,
That She whom this Twin Title decks,
Combines what's good in either sex;
Unites—how very rare the case is—
Masculine sense to female graces;
And quitting not her proper rank,
Is both in one—Fanny and Frank.

12th Oct., 1827.

WRITTEN IN THE SAME.

BY MARY LAMB.

SMALL beauty to your Book my lines can lend,
Yet you shall have the best I can, sweet friend,
To serve for poor memorials 'gainst the day
That calls you from your Parent-roof away,
From the mild offices of Filial life
To the more serious duties of a Wife.
The World is opening to you—may you rest
With all your prospects realised, and blest!—
I, with the Elder Couple left behind,
On evenings chatting, oft shall call to mind
Those spirits of Youth, which Age so ill can miss,
And, wanting you, half grudge your S——n's bliss;
Till mirthful malice tempts us to exclaim
'Gainst the dear Thief, who robb'd you of your *Name*.

ENFIELD CHASE, 17th May, 1828.

LINES SUGGESTED BY A SIGHT OF WALTHAM CROSS.

Time-mouldering Crosses, gemm'd with imagery
  Of costliest work, and Gothic tracery,
Point still the spots, to hallow'd wedlock dear,
  Where rested on its solemn way the bier,
That bore the bones of Edward's Elinor
  To mix with Royal dust at Westminster.—
Far different rites did thee to dust consign,
  Duke Brunswick's daughter, Princely Caroline.
A hurrying funeral, and a banish'd grave,
  High-minded wife! were all that thou could'st have.
Grieve not, great Ghost, nor count in death thy losses;
  Thou in thy life-time had'st thy share of *crosses*.

November 1827.

EPICEDIUM

(GOING OR GONE).

I.

Fine merry franions,
Wanton companions,
My days are ev'n banyans
  With thinking upon ye;
How Death, that last stinger,
Finis-writer, end-bringer,
Has laid his chill finger,
  Or is laying on ye.

II.

There's rich Kitty Wheatley,
With footing it featly
That took me completely,
  She sleeps in the Kirk House;

And poor Polly Perkin,
Whose Dad was still firking
The jolly ale firkin,
She's gone to the Work-house ;

III.

Fine Gard'ner, Ben Carter
(In ten counties no smarter)
Has ta'en his departure
For Proserpine's orchards ;
And Lily, postillion,
With cheeks of vermilion,
Is one of a million
That fill up the church-yards ;

IV.

And, lusty as Dido,
Fat Clemitson's widow
Flits now a small shadow
By Stygian hid ford ;
And good Master Clapton
Has thirty years nap't on,
The ground he last hap't on,
Intomb'd by fair Widford ;

V.

And gallant Tom Dockwra,
Of Nature's finest crockery,
Now but thin air and mockery,
Lurks by Avernus,
Whose honest grasp of hand
Still, while his life did stand,
At friend's or foe's command,
Almost did burn us.

VI.

Roger de Coverley
Not more good man than he ;

Yet has he equally
Push'd for Cocytus,
With drivelling Worral,
And wicked old Dorrell,
'Gainst whom I've a quarrel,
Whose end might affright us !—

VII.

Kindly hearts have I known ;
Kindly hearts, they are flown ;
Here and there if but one
Linger yet uneffaced,
Imbecile tottering elves,
Soon to be wreck'd on shelves,
These scarce are half themselves,
With age and care crazed.

VIII.

But this day Fanny Hutton
Her last dress has put on ;
Her fine lessons forgotten,
She died, as the dunce died :
And prim Betsy Chambers,
Decay'd in her members,
No longer remembers
Things, as she once did :

IX.

And prudent Miss Wither
Not in jest now doth *wither*,
And soon must go—whither
Nor I well, nor you know ;
And flaunting Miss Waller,
That soon must befall her,
Whence none can recall her,
Though proud once as Juno !

1827.

THE GIPSY'S MALISON.

"Suck, baby, suck, mother's love grows by giving,
Drain the sweet founts that only thrive by wasting;
Black manhood comes, when riotous guilty living
Hands thee the cup that shall be death in tasting.

Kiss, baby, kiss, mother's lips shine by kisses,
Choke the warm breath that else would fall in blessings;
Black manhood comes, when turbulent guilty blisses
Tend thee the kiss that poisons 'mid caressings.

Hang, baby, hang, mother's love loves such forces,
Strain the fond neck that bends still to thy clinging;
Black manhood comes, when violent lawless courses
Leave thee a spectacle in rude air swinging."

So sang a wither'd Beldam energetical,
And bann'd the ungiving door with lips prophetical.

1829.

THE CHRISTENING.

ARRAY'D—a half-angelic sight—
In vests of pure Baptismal white,
The Mother to the Font doth bring
The little helpless nameless thing,
With hushes soft and mild caressing,
At once to get—a name and blessing.
Close by the Babe the Priest doth stand,
The Cleansing Water at his hand,
Which must assoil the soul within
From every stain of Adam's sin.
The Infant eyes the mystic scenes,
Nor knows what all this wonder means;
And now he smiles, as if to say
"I am a Christian made this day;"
Now frighted clings to Nurse's hold,
Shrinking from the water cold,
Whose virtues, rightly understood,
Are, as Bethesda's waters, good.
Strange words—The World, The Flesh, The Devil—
Poor Babe, what can it know of Evil?
But we must silently adore
Mysterious truths, and not explore.
Enough for him, in after-times,
When he shall read these artless rhymes,
If, looking back upon this day
With quiet conscience, he can say
"I have in part redeem'd the pledge
Of my Baptismal privilege;
And more and more will strive to flee
All which my Sponsors kind did then renounce for me."

1829.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

Rogers, of all the men that I have known
But slightly, who have died, your Brother's loss
Touch'd me most sensibly. There came across
My mind an image of the cordial tone
Of your fraternal meetings, where a guest
I more than once have sat; and grieve to think,
That of that threefold cord one precious link
By Death's rude hand is sever'd from the rest.
Of our old gentry he appear'd a stem—
A Magistrate who, while the evil-doer
He kept in terror, could respect the Poor,
And not for every trifle harass them,
As some, divine and laic, too oft do.
This man's a private loss, and public too.

1829.

HARMONY IN UNLIKENESS.

By Enfield lanes, and Winchmore's verdant hill,
Two lovely damsels cheer my lonely walk:
The fair Maria, as a vestal, still;
And Emma brown, exuberant in talk.
With soft and Lady speech the first applies
The mild correctives that to grace belong
To her redundant friend, who her defies
With jest, and mad discourse, and bursts of song.
O differing Pair, yet sweetly thus agreeing,
What music from your happy discord rises,
While your companion hearing each, and seeing,
Nor this, nor that, but both together, prizes;
This lesson teaching, which our souls may strike,
That harmonies may be in things unlike!

1829.

Lines addressed to Lieut. R. W. H. Hardy, R.N., on the perusal of his Volume of Travels in the Interior of Mexico.

'Tis pleasant, lolling in our elbow chair,
Secure at home, to read descriptions rare
Of venturous traveller in savage climes;
His hair-breadth 'scapes, toil, hunger—and sometimes
The merrier passages that, like a foil
To set off perils past, sweetened that toil,
And took the edge from danger; and I look
With such fear-mingled pleasure thro' thy book,
Adventurous Hardy! Thou a *diver*[1] art,
But of no common form; and for thy part
Of the adventure, hast brought home to the nation
Pearls of discovery—*jewels* of observation.

Enfield, January, 1830.

TO LOUISA MORGAN.

How blest is he who in his *age*, exempt
From fortune's frowns, and from the troublous strife
Of storms that harass still the private life,
Below ambition, and above contempt,
Hath gain'd a quiet harbour, where he may
Look back on shipwrecks past, without a sigh
For busier scenes, and hope's gay dreams gone by!
And such a nook of blessedness, they say,
Your Sire at length has found; while you, best Child,
Content in his contentment, acquiesce
In patient toils; and in a station less,
Than you might image, when your prospects smiled,
In your meek virtues there is found a calm,
That on his life's soft evening sheds a balm.

[? 1830.]

[1] Captain Hardy practised this art with considerable success.

"ONE DIP."

Much speech obscures the sense ; the soul of wit
Is brevity : our tale one proof of it.
Poor Balbulus, a stammering invalid,
Consults the doctors, and by them is bid
To try sea-bathing, with this special heed,
"One dip was all his malady did need ;
More than that one his certain death would be."
Now who so nervous or so shook as he,
For Balbulus had never dipped before.
Two well-known dippers at the Broadstairs' shore,
Stout sturdy churls have stript him to the skin ;
And naked, cold, and shivering plunge him in.
Soon he emerges with scarce breath to say,
"I'm to be dip-dip-dipt——." "We know it," they
Reply. Expostulation seemed in vain,
And over ears they souse him in again ;
And up again he rises ; his words trip,
And falter as before. Still "dip-dip-dip"—
And in again he goes with furious plunge,
Once more to rise ; when with a desperate lunge
At length he bolts these words out, "*only once !*"
The villains crave his pardon. Had the dunce
But aimed at these bare words the rogues had found
him ;
But striving to be prolix, they have drowned him.

H——y.

1830.

SHE IS GOING.

For their eldest Sister's hair
Martha does a wreath prepare
Of bridal rose, ornate and gay:
To-morrow is the wedding day:
She is going.

Mary, youngest of the three,
Laughing idler, full of glee,
Arm in arm does fondly chain her,
Thinking, poor trifler, to detain her—
But she's going.

Vex not, maidens, nor regret
Thus to part with Margaret.
Charms like yours can never stay
Long within doors; and one day
You'll be going.

NONSENSE VERSES.

LAZY-BONES, lazy-bones, wake up, and peep !
The cat's in the cupboard, your mother's asleep.
There you sit snoring, forgetting her ills ;
Who is to give her her Bolus and Pills ?
Twenty fine Angels must come into town,
All for to help you to make your new gown :
Dainty AERIAL Spinsters, and Singers ;
Aren't you ashamed to employ such white fingers ?
Delicate hands, unaccustom'd to reels,
To set 'em a working a poor body's wheels ?
Why they came down is to me all a riddle,
And left HALLELUJAH broke off in the middle ;
Jove's Court, and the Presence angelical, cut—
To eke out the work of a lazy young slut.
Angel-duck, Angel-duck, winged and silly,
Pouring a watering-pot over a lily,
Gardener gratuitous, careless of pelf,
Leave her to water her lily herself,
Or to neglect it to death if she chuse it :
Remember the loss is her own, if she lose it.

FREE THOUGHTS ON SEVERAL EMINENT COMPOSERS.

Some cry up Haydn, some Mozart,
Just as the whim bites. For my part,
I do not care a farthing candle
For either of them, nor for Handel.
Cannot a man live free and easy,
Without admiring Pergolesi?
Or thro' the world with comfort go,
That never heard of Doctor Blow?
So help me God, I hardly have;
And yet I eat, and drink, and shave,
Like other people, if you watch it,
And know no more of Stave or Crotchet,
Than did the primitive Peruvians,
Or those old ante-queer-Diluvians
That lived in the unwash'd world with Tubal,
Before that dirty Blacksmith Jubal,
By stroke on anvil, or by summ'at,
Found out, to his great surprise, the gamut.
I care no more for Cimerosa,
Than he did for Salvator Rosa,
Being no Painter; & bad luck
Be mine, if I can bear that Gluck.
Old Tycho Brahe, & modern Herschel,
Had something in 'em: but who's Purcel?
The devil, with his foot so cloven,
For ought I care, may take Beethoven;
And, if the bargain does not suit,
I'll throw him Weber in to boot.

There's not the splitting of a splinter
To chuse 'twixt him last named, & Winter.

Of Doctor Pepusch old Queen Dido
Knew just as much, God knows, as I do.
I would not go four miles to visit
Sebastian Bach—or Batch—which is it ?
Nor more I would for Bononcini.
As for Novello, & Rossini,
I shall not say a word to grieve 'em,
Because they're living. So I leave 'em !

1830.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HER TWENTY-FIRST BIRTH-DAY.

Crown me a cheerful goblet, while I pray
A blessing on thy years, young Isola ;
Young, but no more a child. How swift have flown
To me thy girlish times, a woman grown
Beneath my heedless eyes ! in vain I rack
My fancy to believe the almanac,
That speaks thee Twenty-One. Thou should'st have still
Remain'd a child, and at thy sovereign will
Gambol'd about our house, as in times past.
Ungrateful Emma, to grow up so fast,
Hastening to leave thy friends !—for which intent,
Fond Runagate, be this thy punishment.
After some thirty years, spent in such bliss
As this earth can afford, where still we miss
Something of joy entire, may'st thou grow old
As we whom thou hast left ! That wish was cold.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND

O far more ag'd and wrinkled, till folks say,
Looking upon thee reverend in decay,
" This Dame, for length of days, and virtues rare,
With her respected Grandsire may compare."—
Grandchild of that respected Isola,
Thou should'st have had about thee on this day
Kind looks of Parents, to congratulate
Their Pride grown up to woman's grave estate.
But they have died, and left thee, to advance
Thy fortunes how thou may'st, and owe to chance
The friends which Nature grudged. And thou wilt find,
Or make such, Emma, if I am not blind
To thee and thy deservings. That last strain
Had too much sorrow in it. Fill again
Another cheerful goblet, while I say
" Health, and twice health, to our lost Isola."

1830.

TO THE SAME.

External gifts of fortune, or of face,
Maiden, in truth, thou hast not much to show ;
Much fairer damsels have I known, and know,
And richer may be found in every place.
In thy *mind* seek thy beauty, and thy wealth.
Sincereness lodgeth there, the soul's best health.
O guard that treasure above gold or pearl,
Laid up secure from moths and worldly stealth—
And take my benison, plain-hearted girl.

LINES FOR A MONUMENT

COMMEMORATING THE LOSS OF AN ENTIRE FAMILY OF FOUR SONS AND TWO DAUGHTERS WHO WERE DROWNED IN THE RIVER OUSE, NEAR YORK.

TEARS are for lighter griefs. Man weeps the doom,
That seals a single victim to the tomb.
But when Death riots—when, with whelming sway,
Destruction sweeps a family away;
When infancy and youth, a huddled mass,
All in an instant to oblivion pass,
And parents' hopes are crush'd; what lamentation
Can reach the depth of such a desolation?
Look upward, Feeble Ones! look up and trust,
That HE who lays their mortal frame in dust,
Still hath the immortal spirit in his keeping——
In Jesus' sight they are not dead but sleeping.

Nov. 1830.

TO C. ADERS, ESQ.,

ON HIS COLLECTION OF PAINTINGS BY THE OLD GERMAN MASTERS.

FRIENDLIEST of men, ADERS, I never come
Within the precincts of this sacred Room,
But I am struck with a religious fear,
Which says "Let no profane eye enter here."
With imagery from Heav'n the walls are clothed,
Making the things of Time seem vile and loathed.
Spare Saints, whose bodies seem sustain'd by Love,
With Martyrs old in meek procession move.
Here kneels a weeping Magdalen, less bright
To human sense for her blurr'd cheeks; in sight
Of eyes, new-touch'd by Heav'n, more winning fair
Than when her beauty was her only care.
A Hermit here strange mysteries doth unlock
In desart sole, his knees worn by the rock.
There angel harps are sounding, while below
Palm-bearing Virgins in white order go.
Madonnas, varied with so chaste design,
While all are different, each seems genuine,
And hers the only Jesus: hard outline,
And rigid form, by DURER's hand subdued
To matchless grace, and sacro-sanctitude;
DURER, who makes thy slighted Germany
Vie with the praise of paint-proud Italy.

Whoever enter'st here, no more presume
To name a Parlour or a Drawing Room;
But, bending lowly to each holy Story,
Make this thy Chapel and thine Oratory.

1831.

TO LOUISA M——

WHOM I USED TO CALL "MONKEY."

Louisa, serious grown and mild,
I knew you once a romping child,
Obstreperous much, and very wild.
Then you would clamber up my knees,
And strive with every art to tease,
When every art of yours could please.
Those things would scarce be proper now,
But they are gone, I know not how,
And woman's written on your brow.
Time draws his finger o'er the scene;
But I cannot forget between
The thing to me you once have been;
Each sportive sally, wild escape,—
The scoff, the banter, and the jape,—
And antics of my gamesome Ape.

1831.

THE SELF-ENCHANTED.

I had a sense in dreams of a beauty rare,
Whom Fate had spell-bound, and rooted there,
Stooping, like some enchanted theme,
Over the marge of that crystal stream,
Where the blooming Greek, to Echo blind,
With Self-love fond, had to waters pined,
Ages had waked, and ages slept,
And that bending posture still she kept:
For her eyes she may not turn away,
Till a fairer object shall pass that way—
Till an image more beauteous this world can show,
Than her own which she sees in the mirror below.
Pore on, fair Creature! for ever pore,
Nor dream to be disenchanted more:
For vain is expectance, and wish in vain,
'Till a new Narcissus can come again.

THE FIRST LEAF OF SPRING.

Thou fragile, filmy, gossamery thing,
First Leaf of Spring!
At every lightest breath that quakest,
And with a zephyr shakest,
Scarce stout enough to hold thy slender form together,
In calmest halcyon weather,
Next sister to the web that spiders weave,
Poor Flutterers to deceive
Into their treacherous silken bed:
O how art thou sustain'd, how nourish'd!
All trivial as thou art,
Without dispute,
Thou play'st a mighty part,
And art the Herald to a throng
Of buds, blooms, fruit,
That shall thy cracking branches sway,
While birds on every spray
Shall pay the copious fruitage with a sylvan song.
So 'tis with thee, whoe'er on thee shall look,
First Leaf of this beginning modest Book.
Slender thou art, God knowest,
And little grace bestowest.
But in thy train shall follow after
Wit, wisdom, seriousness in hand with laughter;
Provoking jests, restraining soberness,
In their appropriate dress;
And I shall joy to be outdone
By those who brighter trophies won;
Without a grief,
That I thy slender promise had begun,
First Leaf.

TO A FRIEND ON HIS MARRIAGE.

What makes a happy wedlock? What has fate
Not given to thee in thy well-chosen mate?
Good sense—good humour;—these are trivial things,
Dear Moxon, that each trite encomiast sings.
But she hath these, and more. A mind exempt,
From every low-bred passion, where contempt,
Nor envy, nor detraction, ever found
A harbour yet; an understanding sound;
Just views of right and wrong; perception full
Of the deform'd, and of the beautiful,
In life and manners; wit above her sex,
Which, as a gem, her sprightly converse decks;
Exuberant fancies, prodigal of mirth,
To gladden woodland walk, or winter hearth;
A noble nature, conqueror in the strife
Of conflict with a hard discouraging life,
Strengthening the veins of virtue, past the power
Of those whose days have been one silken hour,
Spoil'd fortune's pamper'd offspring; a keen sense
Alike of benefit, and of offence,
With reconcilement quick, that instant springs
From the charged heart with nimble angel wings;
While grateful feelings, like a signet sign'd
By a strong hand, seem burn'd into her mind.
If these, dear friend, a dowry can confer
Richer than land, thou hast them all in her;
And beauty, which some hold the chiefest boon,
Is in thy bargain for a make-weight thrown.

1833.

Samuel Rogers, from an engraving by W. Finden, after the drawing by Sir T. Lawrence.

TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ON THE NEW EDITION OF HIS "PLEASURES OF MEMORY."

When thy gay book hath paid its proud devoirs,
Poetic friend, and fed with luxury
The eye of pampered aristocracy
In glittering drawing-rooms and gilt boudoirs,
O'erlaid with comments of pictorial art,
However rich or rare, yet nothing leaving
Of healthful action to the soul-conceiving
Of the true reader—yet a nobler part
Awaits thy work, already classic styled.
Cheap-clad, accessible, in homeliest show
The modest beauty through the land shall go
From year to year, and render life more mild;
Refinement to the poor man's hearth shall give,
And in the moral heart of England live.

December 1813.

TO T. STOTHARD, ESQ.

ON HIS ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE POEMS OF MR ROGERS.

Consummate Artist, whose undying name
With classic Rogers shall go down to fame,
Be this thy crowning work! In my young days
How often have I, with a child's fond gaze,
Pored on the pictur'd wonders thou hadst done:
Clarissa mournful, and prim Grandison!
All Fielding's, Smollett's heroes, rose to view;
I saw, and I believed the phantoms true.
But, above all, that most romantic tale
Did o'er my raw credulity prevail,
Where Glums and Gawries wear mysterious things,
That serve at once for jackets and for wings.
Age, that enfeebles other men's designs,
But heightens thine, and thy free draught refines.
In several ways distinct you make us feel—
Graceful as Raphael, as Watteau *genteel.*
Your lights and shades, as Titianesque, we praise;
And warmly wish you Titian's length of days.

December 1833.

CHEAP GIFTS.

[In a leaf of a quarto edition of the "Lives of the Saints, written in Spanish by the learned and reverend father, Alfonso Villegas, Divine, of the Order of St Dominick, set forth in English by John Heigham, Anno 1630," bought at a Catholic book-shop in Duke Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, I found, carefully inserted. a painted flower, seemingly coeval with the book itself; and did not, for some time, discover that it opened in the middle, and was the cover to a very humble draught of a St Anne, with the Virgin and Child; doubtless the performance of some poor but pious Catholic, whose meditations it assisted.]

O LIFT with reverent hand that tarnish'd flower,
That shrines beneath her modest canopy
Memorials dear to Romish piety;
Dim specks, rude shapes, of Saints! in fervent hour
The work perchance of some meek devotee,
Who, poor in worldly treasures to set forth
The sanctities she worshipp'd to their worth,
In this imperfect tracery might see
Hints, that all Heaven did to her sense reveal.
Cheap gifts best fit poor givers. We are told
Of the lone mite, the cup of water cold,
That in their way approved the offerer's zeal.
True love shows costliest, where the means are scant;
And, in her reckoning, they *abound*, who *want*.

February 1834.

Miss Clara Novello, from the lithograph by W. Sharp, after a drawing by F. Salabert.

TO CLARA NOVELLO.

The gods have made me most unmusical,
With feelings that respond not to the call
Of stringed harp, or voice,—obtuse and mute
To hautboy, sackbut, dulcimer, and flute;
King David's lyre, that made the madness flee
From Saul, had been but a jew's-harp to me:
Theorbos, violins, French horns, guitars,
Leave in my wounded ears inflicted scars.
I hate those trills, and shakes, and sounds that float
Upon the captive air; I know no note,
Nor ever shall, whatever folks may say,
Of the strange mysteries of *Sol* and *Fa*.
I sit at oratorios like a fish,
Incapable of sound, and only wish
The thing was over. Yet do I admire,
O tuneful daughter of a tuneful sire,
Thy painful labours in a science, which
To your deserts I pray may make you rich
As much as you are loved, and add a grace
To the most musical Novello race.
Women lead men by the nose, some cynics say:
You draw them by the ear,—a delicater way.

July 1834.

TO MARGARET W——.

MARGARET,—in happy hour
Christen'd from that humble flower
  Which we a daisy call,—
May thy pretty namesake be
In all things a type of thee,
  And image thee in all!

Like *it* you show a modest face,
An unpretending native grace.
  The tulip, and the pink,
The china and the damask rose,
And every flaunting flower that blows,
  In the comparing shrink.

Of lowly fields you think no scorn,
Yet gayest gardens would adorn,
  And grace wherever set.
Home-seated in your lonely bower,
Or wedded—a transplanted flower—
  I bless you, Margaret!

Edmonton, Oct. 8, 1834.

OTHER ALBUM VERSES AND ACROSTICS, OF UNCERTAIN DATE

"WHAT IS AN ALBUM?"

'Tis a Book kept by modern Young Ladies for show,
Of which their plain grandmothers nothing did know.
'Tis a medley of scraps, fine verse, & fine prose,
And some things not very like either, God knows.
The soft First Effusions of Beaux and of Belles,
Of future Lord Byrons, and sweet L. E. L.s;
Where wise folk and simple both equally shine,
And you write your nonsense, that I may write mine.
Stick in a fine landscape, to make a display,
A flower-piece, a foreground, all tinted so gay,
As Nature herself (could she see them) would strike
With envy, to think that she ne'er did the like:
And since some Lavaters, with head-pieces comical,
Have pronounc'd people's hands to be physiognomical,
Be sure that you stuff it with autographs plenty,
All framed to a pattern, so stiff, and so dainty.
They no more resemble folks' every-day writing,
Than lines penn'd with pains do extemp'rel enditing;
Or the natural countenance (pardon the stricture)
The faces we make when we sit for our picture.

Thus you have, dearest Emma, an Album complete—
Which may *you* live to finish, and *I* live to see it;
And since you began it for innocent ends,
May it swell, & grow bigger each day with new friends,
Who shall set down kind names, as a token and test,
As I my poor *autograph* sign with the rest.

September 7, 1830.

IN THE ALBUM OF A CLERGYMAN'S LADY.

An Album is a Garden, not for show
Planted, but use; where wholesome herbs should grow.
A Cabinet of curious porcelain, where
No fancy enters, but what's rich or rare.
A Chapel, where mere ornamental things
Are pure as crowns of saints, or angels' wings.
A List of living friends; a holier Room
For names of some since mouldering in the tomb,
Whose blooming memories life's cold laws survive;
And, dead elsewhere, they here yet speak, and live.
Such, and so tender, should an Album be;
And, Lady, such I wish this book to thee.

IN THE AUTOGRAPH OF MRS. SERGEANT WILDE.

Had I a power, Lady, to my will,
You should not want Hand Writings. I would fill
Your leaves with Autographs—resplendent names
Of Knights and Squires of old, and courtly Dames,
Kings, Emperors, Popes. Next under these should stand
The hands of famous Lawyers—a grave band—
Who in their Courts of Law or Equity
Have best upheld Freedom and Property.
These should moot cases in your book, and vie
To show their reading and their Sergeantry.
But I have none of these; nor can I send
The notes by Bullen to her Tyrant penn'd
In her authentic hand; nor in soft hours
Lines writ by Rosamund in Clifford's bowers.
The lack of curious Signatures I moan,
And want the courage to subscribe my own.

IN THE ALBUM OF LUCY BARTON.

Little Book, surnamed of *white*,
Clean as yet, and fair to sight,
Keep thy attribution right.

Never disproportion'd scrawl ;
Ugly blot, that's worse than all ;
On thy maiden clearness fall !

In each letter, here design'd,
Let the reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the owner's mind.

Gilded margins count a sin,
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the golden rules within ;

Sayings fetch'd from sages old ;
Laws which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be graved in gold :

Lighter fancies not excluding ;
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in,
Sometimes mildly interluding

Amid strains of graver measure :
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

Riddles dark, perplexing sense ;
Darker meanings of offence ;
What but *shades*—be banish'd hence.

Whitest thoughts in whitest dress,
Candid meanings, best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress.

September 1824.

IN THE ALBUM OF MISS ——.

I.

Such goodness in your face doth shine,
With modest look, without design,
That I despair, poor pen of mine
Can e'er express it.
To give it words I feebly try ;
My spirits fail me to supply
Befitting language for't, and I
Can only bless it !

II.

But stop, rash verse ! and don't abuse
A bashful Maiden's ear with news
Of her own virtues. She'll refuse
Praise sung so loudly.
Of that same goodness, you admire,
The best part is, she don't aspire
To praise—nor of herself desire
To think too proudly.

IN THE ALBUM OF A VERY YOUNG LADY.

Joy to unknown Josepha who, I hear,
Of all good gifts, to Music most is given ;
Science divine, which through the enraptured ear
Enchants the Soul, and lifts it nearer Heaven.
Parental smiles approvingly attend
Her pliant conduct of the trembling keys,
And listening strangers their glad suffrage lend.
Most musical is Nature. Birds—and Bees
At their sweet labour—sing. The moaning winds
Rehearse a *lesson* to attentive minds.
In louder tones " Deep unto Deep doth call ; "
And there is Music in the Waterfall.

FOR THE ALBUM OF MISS ——, FRENCH TEACHER AT MRS. GISBORN'S SCHOOL, ENFIELD.

Implored for verse, I send you what I can ;
But you are so exact a Frenchwoman,
As I am told, Jemima, that I fear
To wound with English your Parisian ear,
And think I do your choice collection wrong,
With lines not written in the Frenchman's tongue.
Had I a knowledge equal to my will,
With airy *Chansons* I your leaves would fill ;
With *Fabliaux* that should emulate the vein
Of sprightly Gresset or of La Fontaine ;
Or *Scenes Comiques* that should approach the air
Of your own favourite, renowned Molière.
But at my suit the Muse of France looks sour,
And strikes me dumb ! Yet, what is in my power
To testify respect for you, I pray
Take in plain English—our rough Enfield way.

IN THE ALBUM OF MISS DAUBENY.

I.

Some poets by poetic law
Have Beauties praised, they never saw ;
And sung of Kittys, and of Nancys,
Whose charms but lived in their own fancies.
So I, to keep my Muse a-going,
That willingly would still be doing,
A Canzonet or two must try
In praise of—*pretty* Daubeny.

II.

But whether she indeed be comely,
Or only very good and homely,
Of my own eyes I cannot say ;
I trust to Emma Isola.
But sure I think her voice is tuneful,
As smoothest birds that sing in June full ;
For else would strangely disagree
The *flowing* name of—Daubeny.

III.

I hear that she a Book hath got—
As what young Damsel now hath not,
In which they scribble favorite fancies,
Copied from poems or romances ?
And prettiest draughts, of her design,
About the curious Album shine ;
And therefore she shall have for me
The style of—*tasteful* Daubeny.

IV.

Thus far I have taken on believing;
But well I know without deceiving,
That in her heart she keeps alive still
Old school-day likings, which survive still
In spite of absence—worldly coldness—
And thereon can my Muse take boldness
To crown her other praises three
With praise of—*friendly* Daubeny.

IN THE ALBUM OF MRS JANE TOWERS.

Lady unknown, who crav'st from me Unknown
The trifle of a verse these leaves to grace,
How shall I find fit matter? with what face
Address a face that ne'er to me was shown?
Thy looks, tones, gestures, manners, and what not,
Conjecturing, I wander in the dark.
I know thee only Sister to Charles Clarke!
But at thy name my cold Muse waxes hot,
And swears that thou art such a one as he,
Warm, laughter-loving, with a touch of madness,
Wild, glee-provoking, pouring oil of gladness
From frank heart without guile. And, if thou be
The pure reverse of this, and I mistake—
Demure one, I will like thee for his sake.

IN MY OWN ALBUM.

Fresh clad from heaven in robes of white,
A young probationer of light,
Thou wert, my soul, an Album bright,

A spotless leaf; but thought, and care,
And friend and foe, in foul or fair,
Have "written strange defeatures" there;

And Time with heaviest hand of all,
Like that fierce writing on the wall,
Hath stamp'd sad dates—he can't recal;

And error gilding worst designs—
Like speckled snake that strays and shines—
Betrays his path by crooked lines;

And vice hath left his ugly blot;
And good resolves, a moment hot,
Fairly began—but finish'd not;

And fruitless, late remorse doth trace—
Like Hebrew lore a backward pace—
Her irrecoverable race.

Disjointed numbers, sense unknit;
Huge reams of folly, shreds of wit;
Compose the mingled mass of it.

My scalded eyes no longer brook
Upon this ink-blurr'd thing to look—
Go, shut the leaves, and clasp the book.

"TO THE BOOK."

Little casket, storehouse rare
Of rich conceits to please the fair !
Happiest he of mortal men
I crown him Monarch of the Pen—
To whom Sophia deigns to give
The flattering Prerogative
To inscribe his name in chief
On thy first and maiden leaf.—
When thy Pages shall be full
With what brighter Wits can cull
Of the tender, or Romantic—
Creeping prose, or verse gigantic—
Which thy spaces so shall cram,
That the Bee-like epigram,
Which a twofold tribute brings,
Hath not room left wherewithal
To infix its tiny scrawl ;
Haply some more youthful Swain
Striving to describe his pain,
And the Damsel's ear to seize
With more expressive lays than these,
When he finds his own excluded,
And their counterfeits intruded,
While, loitering in the Muses' bower,
He over-staid the Eleventh Hour
Till the Table's filled—shall fret,
Die, or sicken, with regret,
Or into a shadow pine,
While this triumphant verse of mine,
Like to some poorer stranger-guest
Bidden to a Good Man's feast
Shall sit—by merit less than fate—
In the upper seat in state.

IN THE ALBUM OF ROTHA QUILLINAN.

A PASSING glance was all I caught of thee,
In my own Enfield haunts at random roving.
Old friends of ours were with thee, faces loving;
Time short: and salutations cursory,
Though deep, and hearty. The familiar Name
Of you, yet unfamiliar, raised in me
Thoughts—what the daughter of that Man should be,
Who call'd our Wordsworth friend. My thoughts did frame
A growing Maiden, who, from day to day
Advancing still in stature, and in grace,
Would all her lonely Father's griefs efface,
And his paternal cares with usury pay.
I still retain the phantom, as I can;
And call the gentle image—Quillinan.

IN THE ALBUM OF EDITH SOUTHEY.

IN Christian world MARY the garland wears!
REBECCA sweetens on a Hebrew's ear;
Quakers for pure PRISCILLA are more clear;
And the light Gaul by amorous NINON swears.
Among the lesser lights how LUCY shines!
What air of fragrance ROSAMOND throws round!
How like a hymn doth sweet CECILIA sound!
Of MARTHAS, and of ABIGAILS, few lines
Have bragg'd in verse. Of coarsest household stuff
Should homely JOAN be fashion'd. But can
You BARBARA resist, or MARIAN?
And is not CLARE for love excuse enough?
Yet, by my faith in numbers, I profess,
These all, than Saxon EDITH, please me less.

TO DORA WORDSWORTH,

ON BEING ASKED BY HER FATHER TO WRITE IN HER ALBUM.

An Album is a Banquet: from the store,
In his intelligential Orchard growing,
Your Sire might heap your board to overflowing:
One shaking of the Tree—'twould ask no more
To set a salad forth, more rich than that
Which Evelyn in his princely cookery fancied:
Or that more rare, by Eve's neat hands enhanced,
Where, a pleased guest, the Angelic Virtue sat.
But like the all-grasping Founder of the Feast,
Whom Nathan to the sinning king did tax,
From his less wealthy neighbours he exacts;
Spares his own flocks, and takes the poor man's beast.
Obedient to his bidding, lo, I am,
A zealous, meek, *contributory*

Lamb.

IN THE ALBUM OF CATHERINE ORKNEY.

CANADIA ! boast no more the toils
Of hunters for the furry spoils ;
Your whitest ermines are but foils
To brighter Catherine Orkney.

That such a flower should ever burst
From climes with rigorous Winter curst !
We bless you, that so kindly nurst
This flower, this Catherine Orkney.

We envy not your proud display
Of lake—wood—vast Niagara ;
Your greatest pride we've born away.
How spared you Catherine Orkney ?

That Wolfe on Heights of Abraham fell,
To your reproach no more we tell :
Canadia, you repaid us well
With rearing Catherine Orkney.

O Britain, guard with tenderest care
The charge allotted to your share :
You've scarce a native maid so fair,
So good, as Catherine Orkney.

TO MRS ASBURY.

Divided praise, Lady, to you we owe
Of all the health your husband doth bestow
Respected wife of skilful Asbury!
Oracular foresight named thee Dorothy;
'Tis a Greek word, and signifies God's gift;
(How Learning helps poor Poets at a shift!)
You are that gift. When, tired with human ails,

And tedious listening to the sick man's tales,
Sore spent, and fretted, he comes home at eve,
By mild medicaments you his toils deceive.
Under your soothing treatment he revives;
(Restorative is the smile of gentle wives):
You lengthen *his*, who lengthens *all our lives*.

TO DR ASBURY.

Judgments are about us thoroughly;
O'er all Enfield hangs the cholera.
Savage monster none like him
Ever rack'd a human limb;
Pest, nor plague, nor fever yellow,
Has made patients more to bellow.

Vain his threatenings! Asbury comes,
And defiance beats by drums;
Label, bottle, box, pill, potion,
Each enlists in the commotion;

And with vials, like to those
Seen in Patmos,[1] charged with woes,
Breathing wrath, he falls pell-mell
Upon the Foe, and pays him well.
Revenge !—he has made the Monster sick,
Yea, cholera vanish, choleric.

TO SARAH THOMAS.

SARAH, blest wife of "Terah's faithful Son,"
After a race of years with goodness run,
Regardless heard the promised miracle,
And mocked the blessing as impossible.
How weak is Faith !—even He, the most sincere,

Thomas, to his meek Master, not least dear,
Holy and blameless, yet refused assent
Of full belief, until he could content
Mere human senses. In your piety,
As you are *one* in *name*, industriously,
So copy them : but shun their Incredulity.

[1] *Vide* Revelations.

TO CAROLINE MARIA APPLEBEE

Caroline glides smooth in verse,
And is easy to rehearse;
Runs just like some crystal river
O'er its pebbly bed for ever.
Lines as harsh and quaint as mine
In their close at least will shine,
Nor from sweetness can decline,
Ending but with *Caroline*.

Maria asks a statelier pace—
"*Ave Maria*, full of grace!"
Romish rites before me rise,
Image-worship, sacrifice,
And well-meant but mistaken pieties.

Apple with *Bee* doth rougher run.
Paradise was lost by one;
Peace of mind would we regain,
Let us, like the other, strain
Every harmless faculty,
Bee-like at work in our degree,
Ever some sweet task designing,
Extracting still, and still refining.

TO CECILIA CATHERINE LAWTON.

Choral service, solemn chanting,
Echoing round cathedrals holy—
Can ought else on earth be wanting
In heav'ns bliss to plunge us wholly ?
Let us great *Cecilia* honour
In the praise we give unto them,
And the merit be upon her.

Cold the heart that would undo them,
And the solemn organ banish
That this sainted Maid invented.
Holy thoughts too quickly vanish,
Ere the expression can be vented.
Raise the song to *Catherine*,
In her torments most divine !
Ne'er by Christians be forgot—
Envied be—this Martyr's lot.

Lawton, who these *names* combinest,
Aim to emulate their praises ;
Women were they, yet divinest
Truths they taught ; and story raises
O'er their mouldering bones a Tomb,
Not to die till Day of Doom.

TO A LADY WHO DESIRED ME TO WRITE HER EPITAPH.

GRACE JOANNA here doth lie :
Reader, wonder not that I
Ante-date her hour of rest.
Can I thwart her wish exprest,
Even unseemly though the laugh

Jesting with an Epitaph ?
On her bones the turf lie lightly,
And her rise again be brightly !
No dark stain be found upon her—
No, there will not, on mine honour—
Answer that at least I can.

Would that I, thrice happy man,
In as spotless garb might rise,
Light as she will climb the skies,
Leaving the dull earth behind,
In a car more swift than wind.
All her errors, all her failings,
(Many they were not) and ailings,
Sleep secure from Envy's railings.

TO HER YOUNGEST DAUGHTER.

LEAST Daughter, but not least beloved, of *Grace !*
O frown not on a stranger, who from place
Unknown and distant these few lines hath penn'd.
I but report what thy Instructress Friend
So oft hath told us of thy gentle heart.
A pupil most affectionate thou art,
Careful to learn what elder years impart.
Louisa—Clare—by which name shall I call thee ?
A prettier pair of names sure ne'er was found,
Resembling thy own sweetness in sweet sound.
Ever calm peace and innocence befal thee !

TO SARAH JAMES OF BEGUILDY.

Sleep hath treasures worth retracing,
Are you not in slumbers pacing
Round your native spot at times,
And seem to hear Beguildy's chimes?
Hold the airy vision fast;

Joy is but a dream at last:
And what was so fugitive,
Memory only makes to live.
Even from troubles past we borrow
Some thoughts that may lighten sorrow,

Onward as we pace through life,
Fainting under care or strife,

By the magic of a thought
Every object back is brought
Gayer than it was when real,
Under influence ideal.
In remembrance as a glass,
Let your happy childhood pass;
Dreaming so in fancy's spells,
You still shall hear those old church bells.

TO ESTHER FIELD.

Esther, holy name and sweet,
Smoothly runs on even feet,
To the mild Acrostic bending;
Hebrew recollections blending.
Ever keep that Queen in view—
Royal namesake—bold and true!

Firm she stood in evil times,
In the face of Haman's crimes.
Ev'n as She, do Thou possess
Loftiest virtue in the dress
(Dear F.) of native loveliness.

TO MRS BARRON FIELD ON HER RETURN FROM GIBRALTAR.

Jane, you are welcome from the barren Rock,
And Calpe's sounding shores. Oh do not mock,
Now you have rais'd, our greetings; nor again
Ever revisit that dry nook of Spain.

Friends have you here, and friendships to command,
In merry England. Love this hearty land.
Ease, comfort, competence—of these possess'd,
Let prodigal adventurers seek the rest:
Dear England is *as you*,—a "*Field* the Lord hath blest."

TO SARAH LOCKE.

Shall I praise a face unseen,
And extol a fancied mien,
Rave on visionary charm,
And from shadows take alarm?
Hatred hates without a cause.

Love may love without applause,
Or, without a reason given,
Charmèd be with unknown heaven.
Keep the secret, though unmock'd,
Ever in your bosom Lock'd.

TO MARY LOCKE.

Must I write with pen unwilling,
And describe those graces killing,
Rightly, which I never saw?
Yes: it is the Album's law.

Let me, then, invention strain.
On your excelling grace to feign:
Cold is fiction. I believe it,
Kindly as I did receive it—
Even as I. F.'s tongue did weave it.

UN SOLITAIRE.

Solitary man, around thee
Are the mountains! Peace hath found thee
Resting by that rippling tide;
All vain toys of life expelling,
Hermit-like thou find'st a dwelling
Lost 'mid foliage stretching wide.
Angels here alone may find thee;
Contemplation fast does bind thee.
Holier spot, or more fantastic,
Lovelier scene of deep seclusion,
Armed by Nature 'gainst intrusion,
Never graced a seat Monastic.

TO MARIA L. FIELD.

(*Expecting to see her again after a long interval.*)

How many wasting, many wasted years,
Have run their round, since I beheld your face!
In Memory's dim eye it yet appears
Crown'd, as it *then* seem'd, with a cheerful grace,
Young prattling maiden, on the Thames' fair side,
Enlivening pleasant Sunbury with your smiles.
Time may have changed you: coy reserve, or pride,
To sullen looks reduced those mirthful wiles.
I will not 'bate one inch on that clear brow,
But take of Time a rigorous account
When next I see you; and Maria now
Must *be* the thing she *was*. To what amount
These verses else?—All hollow and untrue—
This was not writ, these lines not meant, for *You*.

TO SARAH [APSEY].

AN ACROSTIC.

SARAH, your other name I know not,
And fine encomiums I bestow not.
Regard me as an utter stranger,
A hair-brain'd, hasty, Album-ranger.
Heaven shield you, Girl, from every danger.

THE SISTERS.

ON Emma's honest brow we read display'd
The constant virtues of the Nut-Brown Maid ;
Mellifluous sounds on Clara's tongue we hear,
Notes that once lured a Seraph from his sphere ;
Cecilia's eyes such winning beauties crown
As without song might draw *her* Angel down.

TRANSLATIONS

THE LATIN POEMS OF

VINCENT BOURNE.

I.

IN STATUAM SEPULCHRALEM INFANTIS DORMIENTIS.

Infans venuste, qui, sacros dulces agens,
In hoc sopores marmore,
Placidissimâ quiete compôstus jaces,
Et inscius culpæ et metûs,
Somno fruaris, docta quam dedit manus
Sculptoris; et somno simul,
Quem nescit artifex vel ars effingere,
Fruaris innocentiæ.

II.

CERTAMEN MUSICUM.

Octo trans Tamisin campanis diva Maria;
Cis Tamisin bis sex diva Brigetta sonat.
Hæc tenues urget modulos properantiùs ædes,
Alternat grandes lentiùs illa modos.
Nec quis in alterutro distinguat littore judex,
An magis hæc aurem captet, an illa magis.
Tantæ est harmoniæ contentio musica; turris
Altera cùm numeros, altera pondus habet.

TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE LATIN OF VINCENT BOURNE

I.

ON A SEPULCHRAL STATUE OF AN INFANT SLEEPING.

Beautiful Infant, who dost keep
Thy posture here, and sleep'st a marble sleep,
May the repose unbroken be,
Which the fine Artist's hand hath lent to thee,
While thou enjoy'st along with it
That which no art, or craft, could ever hit,
Or counterfeit to mortal sense,
The heaven-infused sleep of Innocence!

II.

THE RIVAL BELLS.

A Tuneful challenge rings from either side
Of Thames' fair banks. Thy twice six Bells, Saint Bride,
Peal swift and shrill; to which more slow reply
The deep-toned eight of Mary Overy.
Such harmony from the contention flows,
That the divided ear no preference knows;
Betwixt them both disparting Music's State,
While one exceeds in number, one in weight.

III.

EPITAPHIUM IN CANEM.

Pauperis hic Iri requiesco Lyciscus, herilis,
Dum vixi, tutela vigil columenque senectæ,
Dux cæco fidus : nec, me ducente, solebat,
Prætenso hinc atque hinc baculo, per iniqua locorum
Incertam explorare viam ; sed fila secutus,
Quæ dubios regerent passus, vestigia tuta
Fixit inoffenso gressu ; gelidumque sedile
In nudo nactus saxo, quà prætereuntium
Unda frequens confluxit, ibi miserisque tenebras
Lamentis, noctemque oculis ploravit obortam.
Ploravit nec frustra ; obolum dedit alter et alter,
Queis corda et mentem indiderat natura benignam.
Ad latus interea jacui sopitus herile,
Vel mediis vigil in somnis ; ad herilia jussa
Auresque atque animum arrectus, seu frustula amicè
Porrexit sociasque dapes, seu longa diei
Tædia perpessus, reditum sub nocte parabat.

Hi mores, hæc vita fuit, dum fata sinebant,
Dum neque languebam morbis, nec inerte senectâ,
Quæ tandem obrepsit, veterique satellite cæcum
Orbavit dominum : prisci sed gratia facti
Ne tota intereat, longos deleta per annos,
Exiguum hunc Irus tumulum de cespite fecit,
Etsi inopis, non ingratae, munuscula dextrae ;
Carmine signavitque brevi, dominumque canemque
Quod memoret, fidumque canem dominumque benignum.

III.

EPITAPH ON A DOG.

Poor Irus' faithful wolf-dog here I lie,
That wont to tend my old blind master's steps,
His guide and guard; nor, while my service lasted,
Had he occasion for that staff, with which
He now goes picking out his path in fear
Over the highways and crossings, but would plant
Safe in the conduct of my friendly string,
A firm foot forward still, till he had reach'd
His poor seat on some stone, nigh where the tide
Of passers-by in thickest confluence flow'd:
To whom with loud and passionate laments
From morn to eve his dark estate he wail'd.
Nor wail'd to all in vain: some here and there,
The well disposed and good, their pennies gave.
I meantime at his feet obsequious slept;
Not all-asleep in sleep, but heart and ear
Prick'd up at his least motion, to receive
At his kind hand my customary crumbs,
And common portion in his feast of scraps;
Or when night warn'd us homeward, tired and spent
With our long day and tedious beggary.
These were my manners, this my way of life,
Till age and slow disease me overtook,
And sever'd from my sightless master's side.
But lest the grace of so good deeds should die,
Through tract of years in mute oblivion lost,
This slender tomb of turf hath Irus rear'd,
Cheap monument of no ungrudging hand,
And with short verse inscribed it, to attest,
In long and lasting union to attest,
The virtues of the Beggar and his Dog.

IV.

CANTATRICES.

Quâ septem vicos conterminat una columna,
Consistunt nymphæ Sirenum ex agmine binæ ;
Stramineum capiti tegimen, collumque per omne
Ingentes electri orbes : utrique pependit
Crustato vestis cœno, limoque rigescens
Crure usque à medio calcem defluxit ad imum.
Exiguam secum pendentem ex ubere natam
Altera ; venales dextrâ tulit altera chartas.
His vix dispositis, pueri innuptæque puellæ
Accurrunt : sutor primus, cui lorea vitta
Impediit crines, humili, quæ proxima stabat,
Proruit è cellâ, chartas, si fortè placerent,
Empturus ; namque ille etiam se carmine multo
Oblectat, longos solus quo rite labores
Diminuit, fallitque hybernæ tædia noctis.
Collecti murmur sensim increbescere vulgi
Audit ; et excurrit nudis ancilla lacertis.
Incudem follesque et opus fabrile relinquens,
Se densæ immiscet plebi niger ora Pyracmon.
It juxtâ, depressum ingens cui mantica tergum
Incurvat, tardo passu ; simul ille coronam
Aspectat vulgi, spe carminis arrigit aures ;
Statque moræ patiens, humeris nec pondera sentit.
Sic ubi Tartareum regem Rhodopeïus Orpheus
Threiciis studiit fidibus mulcere, laboris
Immemor, Æolides stupuit modulamina plectri.

'Where seven fair streets to one tall Column drew'

IV.

THE BALLAD SINGERS.

WHERE seven fair Streets to one tall Column[1] draw,
Two Nymphs have ta'en their stands, in hats of straw;
Their yellower necks huge beads of amber grace,
And by their trade they're of the Siren's race:
With cloak loose-pinn'd on each, that has been red,
But long with dust and dirt discoloured
Belies its hue; in mud behind, before,
From heel to middle leg becrusted o'er.
One a small infant at the breast does bear;
And one in her right hand her tuneful ware,
Which she would vend. Their station scarce is taken,
When youths and maids flock round. His stall forsaken,
Forth comes a Son of Crispin, leathern-capt,
Prepared to buy a ballad, if one apt
To move his fancy offers. Crispin's sons
Have, from uncounted time, with ale and buns
Cherish'd the gift of *Song*, which sorrow quells;
And, working single in their low-rooft cells,
Oft cheat the tedium of a winter's night
With anthems warbled in the Muses' spight.
Who now hath caught the alarm? the Servant Maid
Hath heard a buzz at distance; and, afraid
To miss a note, with elbows red comes out.
Leaving his forge to cool, Pyracmon stout
Thrusts in his unwash'd visage. *He* stands by,
Who the hard trade of Porterage does ply
With stooping shoulders. What cares he? he sees

[1] Seven Dials.

Nec sensit funesti onera incumbentia saxi.
Sæpe interventus rhedæ crepitantis, ab illo
Vicorum, aut illo, stipantem hinc inde catervam
Dividit ; at rursus coeunt, ubi transiit illa,
Ut coeunt rursus, puppis quas dividit, undæ.
Canticulæ interea narraverat argumentum
Altera Sirenum, infidi perjuria nautæ,
Deceptamque dolo nympham : tum flebile carmen
Flebilibus movit numeris, quos altera versu
Alterno excepit : patulis stant rictibus omnes :
Dextram ille acclinat, lævam ille attentiùs aurem,
Promissum carmen captare paratus hiatu.
Longa referre mora est, animum quâ vicerit arte
Virgineum juvenis. Jam poscunt undique chartas
Protensæ emptorum dextræ, quas illa vel illa
Distribuit, cantatque simul : neque ferreus iste
Est usquam auditor, dulcis cui lene camœna
Non adhibet tormentum, et furtivum elicit assem.
Stat medios inter baculoque innititur Irus ;
Nec tamen hic loculo parcit, sed prodigus æris
Emptor adest, solvit pretium, carmenque requirit.
Fors juxtà adstabat vetula iracundior æquo ;
Quæ loculo ex imo invitum, longúmque latentem
Depromens vix tandem obolum, "cedo, fœmina, chartam,"
Inquit ; "ut æternum monumentum in pariete figam,
Cum laribus mansurum ipsis, quàm credula nymphis
Pectora sint ; fraudis quàm plena et perfida nautis."

The assembled ring, nor heeds his tottering knees,
But pricks his ears up with the hopes of song.
So, while the Bard of Rhodope his wrong
Bewail'd to Proserpine on Thracian strings,
The tasks of gloomy Orcus lost their stings,
And stone-vext Sysiphus forgets his load.
Hither and thither from the sevenfold road
Some cart or waggon crosses, which divides
The close-wedged audience; but, as when the tides
To ploughing ships give way, the ship being past,
They re-unite, so these unite as fast.
The older Songstress hitherto hath spent
Her elocution in the argument
Of their great Song in *prose;* to wit, the woes
Which Maiden true to faithless Sailor owes—
Ah! "*Wandering He!*"—which now in loftier *verse*
Pathetic they alternately rehearse.
All gaping wait the event. This Critic opes
His right ear to the strain. The other hopes
To catch it better with his left. Long trade
It were to tell, how the deluded Maid
A victim fell. And now right greedily
All hands are stretching forth the songs to buy,
That are so tragical; which She, and She,
Deals out, and *sings the while;* nor can there be
A breast so obdurate here, that will hold back
His contribution from the gentle rack
Of Music's pleasing torture. Irus' self,
The staff-propt Beggar, his thin gotten pelf
Brings out from pouch, where squalid farthings rest,
And boldly claims his ballad with the best.
An old Dame only lingers. To her purse
The penny sticks. At length, with harmless curse,
"Give me," she cries. "I'll paste it on my wall,
While the wall lasts, to show what ills befall
Fond hearts, seduced from Innocency's way;
How Maidens fall, and Mariners betray."

v.

AD DAVIDEM COOK

WESTMONASTERII CUSTODEM NOCTURNUM ET VIGILANTISSIMUM, ANNO 1716.

INDICIUM qui sæpe mihi das carmen amoris,
Reddo tibi indicium carmen amoris ego.
Qui faustum et felix multum mihi mane precaris;
Dico atque ingemino nunc tibi rursus, ave.
Te neque dinumerat Gallus constantius horas,
Nec magis is certo provocat ore diem.
Cùm variis implent tenebræ terroribus orbem,
Tu comite assuetum cum cane carpis iter.
Nec te, quos seræ emittunt post vina popinæ,
Nec te, quos lemures plurima vidit anus;
Nec te perterrent, nodoso stipite fretum,
Subdola qui tacito pectore furta parant.
Sed si cui occurras, primâ qui portat ad urbem
Sub luce, exiguus quas dedit hortus opes,
Hunc placidus dictis, et voce affaris amicâ;
Utque dies faustâ luce, precaris, eat.
Tinnitu adventum signans, oriantur an astra,
Narras, an pure lucida Luna micet.
Dumque quies nos alta manet, nex frigoris ullus
Securos, pluviæ nec metus ullus habet;
Tu gelidos inter ventos versaris et imbres,
Cùm mala tempestas, et nigra sævit hiems.
Seu te præsentum vicus, seu viculus, audit;
Nocturnum multo carmine fallis iter.
Quid si, culta minùs, doctâ vacet arte poesis,
Si simplex versus sit, numerique rudes;

v.

TO DAVID COOK,

OF THE PARISH OF ST MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER, WATCHMAN.

For much good-natured verse received from thee,
A loving verse take in return from me.
"Good morrow to my masters," is your cry;
And to our David, "twice as good," say I.
Not Peter's monitor, shrill chanticleer,
Crows the approach of dawn in notes more clear,
Or tells the hours more faithfully. While night
Fills half the world with shadows of affright,
You with your lantern, partner of your round,
Traverse the paths of Margaret's hallow'd bound.
The tales of ghosts which old wives' ears drink up,
The drunkard reeling home from tavern cup,
Nor prowling robber, your firm soul appal;
Arm'd with thy faithful staff, thou slight'st them all.
But if the market gard'ner chance to pass,
Bringing to town his fruit, or early grass,
The gentle salesman you with candour greet,
And with reit'rated "good mornings" meet.
Announcing your approach by formal bell,
Of nightly weather you the changes tell;
Whether the Moon shines, or her head doth steep
In rain-portending clouds. When mortals sleep
In downy rest, you brave the snows and sleet
Of winter; and in alley, or in street,

Invidiam Somnus (tanta indulgentia noctis)
Opprimit ; et livor, te recitante, silet.
Divorum hyberni menses quotcunque celebrant,
Cuique locum et versum dat tua musa suum :
Crispino ante omnes ; neque enim sine carmine fas est
Nobile sutorum præteriisse decus.
Nec tua te pietas fieri permiserit unquam
Cæsaris immemorem Cæsareæque domûs.
Officio Dominos multo Dominasque salutas ;
Gratia nec fidæ sedulitatis abest.
Multa docens juvenes, et pulchras multa puellas,
Utile tu pueris virginibusque canis :
Conjugium felix monitis utentibus optas,
Cunctaque quæ castus gaudia lectus habet.
Tu monitor famulis sexûs utriusque benignus,
Munditias illis præcipis, hisce fidem.
Omnibus at votis hoc oras, atque peroras,
Ut dominis cedant prospera quæque tuis.
Unum hos præ cunctis meminisse hortaris, ut imis
Summa etiam exæquet mortis amica manus.
Quid tibi pro totidem meritis speremus ? amori
Quisve tuo æqualis retribuator amor ?
Tuque tuusque canis si nos visetis, uterque
Grati eritis nobis, tuque tuusque canis.
Mille domos adeas, et non ignobile munus
(Nulla minus solido) dent tibi mille domus ;
Quemque bonum exoptas nobis, lætumque Decembrem,
Esto tibi pariter lætus, et esto bonus.

Relieve your midnight progress with a verse.
What though fastidious Phœbus frown averse
On your didactic strain—indulgent Night
With caution hath seal'd up both ears of Spite,
And critics sleep while you in staves do sound
The praise of long-dead Saints, whose Days abound
In wintry months; but Crispin chief proclaim:
Who stirs not at that Prince of Coblers' name?
Profuse in loyalty some couplets shine,
And wish long days to all the Brunswick line!
To youths and virgins they chaste lessons read;
Teach wives and husbands how their lives to lead;
Maids to be cleanly, footmen free from vice;
How death at last all ranks doth equalise;
And, in conclusion, pray good years befal,
With store of wealth, your "worthy masters all."
For this and other tokens of good will,
On boxing day may store of shillings fill
Your Christmas purse; no householder give less,
When at each door your blameless suit you press:
And what you wish to us (it is but reason)
Receive in turn—the compliments o' th' season!

VI.

MEMORIÆ SACRUM

BENJAMINI FERRERS

PICTORIS SURDI ET MUTI: QUI OBIIT ANNO MDCCXXXII.

Et tu! tune avidæ rapina mortis!
Et tu præda voracis es sepulchri!
Nec virtus tua te redemit orco,
Nec vitæ tenor innocenter actæ!
At siquid pia prorogare musa
Contracti spatio valebit ævi,
Te justum memorabit integrumque
Morum; te tenebris silentioque
In lucem eripiet, dabitque famæ,
Annis quod deerat, superfuturæ.
Nascenti quòd et obseravit aures,
Et linguæ docilis negavit usum;
Hoc rerum tibi consulebat author:
Ne purum mala pectus inquinaret
Ubertas vitii, et libido culpæ;
Corruptam scelere, et fide carentem
Ne fraus argueret dolusque mentem:
Ut pravâ sine labe, sæculique
Præsens nequitiæ, nec interesses.
Humanas neque res et actiones
Spectabas minùs, ut vel hoc, vel illud,
Vel quidquam fugeret tuum sagacem
Captum; quin calamis, et hoc et illud,
Expressum in tabulas statim referres.
Quanquam nulla tibi necessitudo
Cum libris fuit; id rependit omne,
(Quod vitæ propius tuæ magisque
Allusit) studium silentis artis.
Maturi mihi vis amica fati

VI.

ON A DEAF AND DUMB ARTIST.[1]

And hath thy blameless life become
A prey to the devouring tomb ?
A more mute silence hast thou known,
A deafness deeper than thine own,
While Time was ? and no friendly Muse,
That mark'd thy life, and knows thy dues,
Repair with quickening verse the breach,
And write thee into light and speech ?
The Power, that made the Tongue, restrain'd
Thy lips from lies, and speeches feign'd ;
Who made the Hearing, without wrong
Did rescue thine from Siren's song.
He let thee *see* the ways of men,
Which thou with pencil, not with pen,
Careful Beholder, down didst note,
And all their motley actions quote,
Thyself unstain'd the while. From look
Or gesture reading, more than *book*,
In letter'd pride thou took'st no part,
Contented with the Silent Art,
Thyself as silent. Might I be
As speechless, deaf, and good, as He !

[1] Benjamin Ferrers—died A.D. 1732.

Cùm lucem ferè clauserit supremum,
Tam sanctè, placidè, piè peractam
Ætatem oh! recolam, recolligamque
Turpi crimine tam procul remotam;
Non est, quod superos priùs rogârim.

VII.

PERVENIRI AD SUMMUM NISI EX PRINCIPIIS NON POTEST.

NEWTONUM ingentem, lumen non unius ævi,
A. B. quæ docuit prima, magistra fuit.
Doctior ille statim vetulâ, cito sensit inani
Quiddam his literulis magus inesse sono.
Protinus egregios elementis repperit usus;
Usus, quos nunquam conjiciebat anus.
Notosque ignotis numeros conferre peritus,
Inde potestates format utrisque datas.
Laudo tamen vetulæ præcepta ea primula, quæque
Newtoni haud dubitem dicere Principia.

VIII.

LIMAX.

FRONDIBUS et pomis herbisque tenaciter hæret
Limax, et secum portat ubique domum.
Tutus in hac sese occultat, siquando peric'lum
Imminet, aut subitæ decidit imber aquæ.
Cornua vel leviter tangas, se protinus in se
Colligit, in proprios contrahiturque lares.
Secum habitat, quacunque habitat; sibi tota supellex;
Solæ, quas adamat, quasque requirit, opes.
Secum potat, edit, dormit; sibi in ædibus îsdem
Conviva et comes est, hospes et hospitium.
Limacem, quacunque siet, quacunque moretur,
(Siquis eum quærat) dixeris esse domi.

NEWTON'S PRINCIPIA.

VII.

GREAT Newton's self, to whom the world's in debt,
Owed to School Mistress sage his Alphabet;
But quickly wiser than his Teacher grown,
Discover'd properties to her unknown;
Of A *plus* B, or *minus*, learn'd the use,
Known Quantities from unknown to educe;
And made—no doubt to that old dame's surprise—
The Christ-Cross-Row his Ladder to the skies.
Yet, whatsoe'er Geometricians say,
Her Lessons were his true PRINCIPIA!

VIII.

THE HOUSE-KEEPER.

THE frugal snail, with fore-cast of repose,
Carries his house with him, where'er he goes;
Peeps out—and if there comes a shower of rain,
Retreats to his small domicile amain.
Touch but a tip of him, a horn—'tis well—
He curls up in his sanctuary shell.
He's his own landlord, his own tenant; stay
Long as he will, he dreads no Quarter Day.
Himself he boards and lodges; both invites,
And feasts, himself; sleeps with himself o' nights.
He spares the upholsterer trouble to procure
Chattles; himself is his own furniture,
And his sole riches. Wheresoe'er he roam—
Knock when you will—he's sure to be at home.

IX.

SCHOLA RHETORICES.

Londini ad pontem, Billingi nomine, porta est,
Unde ferunt virides ostrea Nereides.
Hic sibi perpetuam legit facundia sedem ;
Nec modus hic verbis, neve figura deest.
Sermonem densis oratrix floribus ornat,
Et fundit varios, ingeminatque, tropos.
Et nervi, et veneres, et vis, et copia fandi,
Insunt ; et justum singula pondus habent.
O sedes, totidem multùm celebrata per annos !
Omne tibi rostrum cedit, et omne forum.
Utraque, quos malit, titulos academia jactet
At tibi linguarum Janua nomen erit.

IX.

THE FEMALE ORATORS.

NIGH London's famous Bridge, a Gate more famed
Stands, or once stood, from old Belinus named,
So judged Antiquity ; and therein wrongs
A name, allusive strictly to *two Tongues*.[1]
Her School hard by the Goddess Rhetoric opes,
And *gratis* deals to Oyster-wives her Tropes.
With Nereid green, green Nereid disputes,
Replies, rejoins, confutes, and still confutes.
One her coarse sense by metaphors expounds,
And one in literalities abounds ;
In mood and figure these keep up the din :
Words multiply, and every word tells in.
Her hundred throats here bawling Slander strains ;
And unclothed Venus to her tongue gives reins
In terms, which Demosthenic force outgo,
And baldest jests of foul-mouth'd Cicero.
Right in the midst great Ate keeps her stand,
And from her sovereign station taints the land.
Hence Pulpits rail ; grave Senates learn to jar ;
Quacks scold ; and Billingsgate infects the Bar.

[1] *Billingis* in the Latin.

OTHER TRANSLATIONS

HERCULES PACIFICATUS.

A TALE FROM SUIDAS.

In days of yore, ere early Greece
Had dream'd of patrols or police,
A crew of rake-hells *in terrorem*
Spread wide, and carried all before 'em,
Rifled the poultry, and the women,
And held that all things were in common ;
Till Jove's great Son the nuisance saw,
And did abate it by Club Law.
Yet not so clean he made his work,
But here and there a rogue would lurk
In caves and rocky fastnesses,
And shunn'd the strength of Hercules.

Of these, more desperate than others,
A pair of ragamuffin brothers
In secret ambuscade join'd forces,
To carry on unlawful courses.
These Robbers' names, enough to shake us,
Were, Strymon one, the other Cacus.
And, more the neighbourhood to bother,
A wicked dam they had for mother,
Who knew their craft, but not forbid it,
And whatsoe'er they nymm'd, she hid it ;
Received them with delight and wonder,
When they brought home some 'special plunder ;
Call'd them her darlings, and her white boys,
Her ducks, her dildings—all was right boys—

And each his wicked wits 'gan rub,
How to bear off the famous club;

"Only," she said, "my lads, have care
Ye fall not into BLACK BACK's snare;
For, if he catch, he'll maul your *corpus*,
And clapper-claw you to some purpose."
She was in truth a kind of witch,
Had grown by fortune-telling rich;
To spells and conjurings did tackle her,
And read folks' dooms by light oracular;
In which she saw as clear as daylight,
What mischief on her bairns would a-light;
Therefore she had a special loathing
For all that own'd that sable clothing.

Who can 'scape fate, when we're decreed to 't?
The graceless brethren paid small heed to 't.
A brace they were of sturdy fellows,
As we may say, that fear'd no colours,
And sneer'd with modern infidelity
At the old gipsy's fond credulity.
It proved all true tho', as she'd mumbled—
For on a day the varlets stumbled
On a green spot—*sit linguæ fides*—
'Tis Suidas tells it—where Alcides
Secure, as fearing no ill neighbour,
Lay fast asleep after a "Labour."
His trusty oaken plant was near—
The prowling rogues look round, and leer,
And each his wicked wits 'gan rub,
How to bear off the famous Club;
Thinking that they, *sans* price or hire wou'd
Carry 't strait home, and chop for fire wood.
'Twould serve their old dame half a winter—
You stare? but 'faith it was no splinter;
I would not for much money 'spy
Such beam in any neighbour's eye,
The villains these exploits not dull in,
Incontinently fell a pulling.

They found it heavy—no slight matter—
But tugg'd, and tugg'd it, till the clatter
'Woke Hercules, who in a trice
Whipt up the knaves, and with a splice,
He kept on purpose—which before
Had served for giants many a score—
To end of Club tied each rogue's head fast ;
Strapping feet too, to keep them steadfast ;
And pickaback them carries townwards,
Behind his brawny back head-downwards
(So foolish calf—for rhyme I bless X—
Comes *nolens volens* out of Essex) ;
Thinking to brain them with his *dextra*,
Or string them up upon the next tree.
That Club—so equal fates condemn—
They thought to catch, has now catch'd them.

Now Hercules, we may suppose,
Was no great dandy in his clothes ;
Was seldom, save on Sundays, seen
In calimanco, or nankeen ;
On anniversaries would try on
A jerkin spick-span new from lion ;
Went bare for the most part, to be cool,
And save the time of his Groom of the Stole ;
Besides, the smoke he had been in
In Stygian gulf, had dyed his skin
To a natural sable—a right hell-fit—
That seem'd to careless eyes black velvet.

The brethren from their station scurvy,
Where they hung dangling topsy turvy,
With horror view the black costume,
And each presumes his hour is come !
Then softly to themselves 'gan mutter
The warning words their dame did utter ;
Yet not so softly, but with ease

Were overheard by Hercules.
Quoth Cacus—"This is he she spoke of,
Which we so often made a joke of."
"I see, said th' other, thank our sin for 't—
'Tis Black Back sure enough—we're in for 't."

His Godship, who, for all his brag
Of roughness, was at heart a wag,
At his new name was tickled finely,
And fell a laughing most divinely.
Quoth he, "I'll tell this jest in heaven—
The musty rogues shall be forgiven;"
So in a twinkling did uncase them,
On mother earth once more to place them—
The varlets, glad to be unhamper'd,
Made each a leg—then fairly scampered.

THE PARTING SPEECH OF THE CELESTIAL MESSENGER TO THE POET.

(*From the Latin of Palingenius, in the Zodiacus Vitæ.*)

But now time warns (my mission at an end)
That to Jove's starry court I re-ascend;
From whose high battlements I take delight
To scan your earth, diminish'd to the sight,
Pendant, and round, and, as an apple, small;
Self-propt, self-balanced, and secure from fall
By her own weight: and how with liquid robe
Blue ocean girdles round her tiny globe,
While lesser Nereus, gliding like a snake,
Betwixt her lands his flexile course doth take,
Shrunk to a rivulet; and how the Po,
The mighty Ganges, Tanais, Ister, show

No bigger than a ditch which rains have swell'd.
Old Nilus' seven proud mouths I late beheld,
And mock'd the watery puddles. Hosts steel-clad
Ofttimes I thence behold ; and how the sad
Peoples are punish'd by the fault of kings,
Which from the purple fiend Ambition springs.
Forgetful of mortality, they live
In hot strife for possessions fugitive,
At which the angels grieve. Sometimes I trace
Of fountains, rivers, seas, the change of place ;
By ever-shifting course, and Time's unrest,
The vale exalted, and the mount deprest
To an inglorious valley ; plough-shares going
Where tall trees rear'd their tops ; and fresh trees growing
In antique postures ; cities lose their site.
Old things wax new. O what a rare delight
To him, who from this vantage, can survey
At once stern Afric, and soft Asia,
With Europe's cultured plains ; and in their turns
Their scattered tribes : those whom the hot Crab burns,
The tawny Ethiops ; Orient Indians ;
Getulians ; ever-wandering Scythians ;
Swift Tartar hordes ; Cilicians rapacious,
And Parthians with black-bended bow pugnacious ;
Sabeans incense-bringing, men of Thrace,
Italian, Spaniard, Gaul, and that rough race
Of Britons, rigid as their native colds ;
With all the rest the circling sun beholds !
But clouds, and elemental mists, deny
These visions blest to any fleshly eye.

EXISTENCE, CONSIDERED IN ITSELF, NO BLESSING.

FROM THE LATIN OF PALINGENIUS.

The Poet, after a seeming approval of suicide, from a consideration of the cares and crimes of life, finally rejecting it, discusses the negative importance of existence, contemplated in itself, without reference to good or evil.

Of these sad truths consideration had—
Thou shalt not fear to quit this world so mad,
So wicked ; but the tenet rather hold
Of wise Calanus, and his followers old,
Who with their own wills their own freedom wrought,
And by self-slaughter their dismissal sought
From this dark den of crime—this horrid lair
Of men, that savager than monsters are ;
And scorning longer, in this tangled mesh
Of ills, to wait on perishable flesh,
Did with their desperate hands anticipate
The too, too slow relief of lingering fate.
And if religion did not stay thine hand,
And God, and Plato's wise behests, withstand,
I would in like case counsel thee to throw
This senseless burden off, of cares below.
Not wine, *as* wine, men choose, but as it came
From such or such a vintage : 'tis the same
With life, which simply must be understood
A blank negation, if it be not good.
But if 'tis wretched all—as men decline
And loath the sour lees of corrupted wine,—
'Tis so to be contemn'd. Merely TO BE
Is not a boon to seek, nor ill to flee,

Seeing that every vilest little Thing
Has it in common, from a gnat's small wing,
A creeping worm, down to the moveless stone,
And crumbling bark from trees. Unless TO BE,
And TO BE BLEST, be one, I do not see
In bare existence, *as* existence, aught
That's worthy to be loved, or to be sought.

TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

THOUGH thou'rt like Judas, an apostate black,
In the resemblance one thing thou dost lack :
When he had gotten his ill-purchased pelf,
He went away, and wisely hanged himself.
This thou may'st do at last ; yet much I doubt,
If thou hast any *bowels* to gush out !

TWELFTH NIGHT:

CHARACTERS THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN DRAWN ON THE ABOVE EVENING.

MR A——N.

I PUT my night-cap on my head,
And went, as usual, to my bed ;
And, most surprising to relate,
I woke—a Minister of State !

MESSRS C——G AND F——E.

AT Eton School brought up with dull boys,
We shone like *men* among the *school-boys :*
But since we in the world have been,
We are but *school-boys* among *men.*

THE TRIUMPH OF THE WHALE.

Io! Pæan! Io! sing
To the finny people's King.
Not a mightier Whale than this
In the vast Atlantic is.
Not a fatter fish than he
Flounders round the polar sea.
See his blubber—at his gills
What a world of drink he swills,
From his trunk, as from a spout,
Which next moment he pours out.
Such his person—next declare,
Muse, who his companions are.
Every fish of generous kind
Scuds aside or slinks behind;
But about his presence keep
All the Monsters of the deep;
Mermaids, with their tails and singing,
His delighted fancy stinging;
Crooked dolphins, they surround him;
Dog-like seals, they fawn around him;
Following hard, the progress mark
Of the intolerant salt sea Shark;
For his solace and relief,
Flat-fish are his courtiers chief;
Last, and lowest in his train,
Ink-fish (libellers of the main)
Their black liquor shed in spite
(Such on earth *the things that write*).
In his stomach some do say
No good thing can ever stay;
Had it been the fortune of it
To have swallow'd that old prophet,

Three days there he'd not have dwell'd,
But in one have been expell'd.
Hapless mariners are they,
Who beguil'd (as seamen say)
Deeming him some rock or island,
Footing sure, safe spot, and dry land,
Anchor in his scaly rind ;
Soon the difference they find ;
Sudden plumb he sinks beneath them—
Does to ruthless seas bequeathe them !
Name or title, what has he ?
Is he Regent of the Sea ?
From this difficulty free us,
Buffon, Banks, or sage Linnæus.
With his wond'rous attributes
Say what appellation suits ?
By his bulk and by his size,
By his oily qualities,
This (or else my eyesight fails),
This should be the PRINCE OF WHALES.

R. ET R.

EPIGRAMS.

I.

Princeps his rent from tinneries draws,
His best friends are refiners ;—
What wonder then his other friends
He leaves for under-*miners*.

II.

Ye Politicians, let me, pray,
Why thus with woe and care rent ?
This is the worst that you can say,
Some wind has blown the *wig* away,
And left the *hair apparent*.

R. et R.

THE GODLIKE.

In one great man we view with odds
A parallel to all the gods.
Great Jove, that shook heaven with his brow,
Could never match his princely bow.
In him a Bacchus we behold ;
Like Bacchus, too, he ne'er grows old.
Like Phœbus next, a flaming lover ;
And then he's Mercury—all over.
A Vulcan for domestic strife,
He lamely lives without his wife.
And sure—unless our wits be dull—
Minerva-like, when moon was full,
He issued from paternal scull.

R. et R.

THE THREE GRAVES.

Close by the ever-burning brimstone beds,
Where Bedloe, Oates, and Judas, hide their heads,
I saw great Satan like a Sexton stand
With his intolerable spade in hand,
Digging three graves. Of coffin shape they were,
For those who, coffinless, must enter there
With unblest rites. The shrouds were of that cloth
Which Clotho weaveth in her blackest wrath :
The dismal tinct oppress'd the eye, that dwelt
Upon it long, like darkness to be felt.
The pillows to these baleful beds were toads,
Large, living, livid, melancholy loads,
Whose softness shock'd. Worms of all monstrous size
Crawl'd round ; and one, upcoil'd, which never dies.
A doleful bell, inculcating despair,
Was always ringing in the heavy air.
And all about the detestable pit
Strange headless ghosts, and quarter'd forms, did flit ;
Rivers of blood from dripping traitors spilt,
By treach'ry stung from poverty to guilt.
I ask'd the fiend, for whom those rites were meant ?
"These graves," quoth he, "when life's brief oil is spent,
When the dark night comes, and they're sinking bedwards,—
I mean for Castles, Oliver, and Edwards."

R. et R.

SONNET TO MATTHEW WOOD, ESQ.,

ALDERMAN AND M.P.

Hold on thy course uncheck'd, heroic Wood !
Regardless what the player's son may prate,
Saint Stephens' Fool—the Zany of Debate—
Who nothing generous ever understood.
London's twice Prætor ! scorn the fool-born jest—
The stage's scum, the refuse of the players—
Stale topics against Magistrates and Mayors—
City and Country both thy worth attest.
Bid him leave off his shallow Eton wit,
More fit to sooth the superficial ear
Of drunken Pitt, and that pickpocket Peer,
When at their sottish orgies they did sit,
Hatching mad counsels from inflated vein,
Till England, and the nations, reeled with pain.

R. et R.

ON A PROJECTED JOURNEY.

To gratify his people's wish
See G——e at length prepare—
He's setting out for Hanover—
We've often wish'd him there.

R. et R.

SONG FOR THE C————N.

TUNE :—"*Roy's wife of Aldivalloch.*"

Roi's wife of Brunswick Oëls !
Roi's wife of Brunswick Oëls !
Wot you how she came to him,
While he supinely dreamt of no ills ?

Vow ! but she is a canty Queen,
And well can she scare each royal orgie.—
To us she ever must be dear,
Though she's for ever cut by Georgie.—
Roi's wife, &c. *Da capo.*

R. ET R.

THE UNBELOVED.

NOT a woman, child, or man in
All this isle, that loves thee, C——ng.
Fools, whom gentle manners sway,
May incline to C———gh,
Princes, who old ladies love,
Of the Doctor may approve,
Chancery lads do not abhor
Their chatty, childish Chancellor,
In Liverpool some virtues strike,
And little Van's beneath dislike.
Tho', if I were to be dead for 't,
I could never love thee, H———t,
(Every man must have his way)
Other grey adulterers may.
But thou, unamiable object,—
Dear to neither prince, nor subject—
Veriest, meanest scab, for pelf
Fastning on the skin of Guelph,
Thou, thou must, surely, *loathe thyself.*

R. ET R.

THE ROYAL WONDERS.

Two miracles at once! Compell'd by fate,
His tarnish'd throne the Bourbon doth vacate;
While English William,—a diviner thing,—
Of his free pleasure hath put off *the king*.
The forms of distant old respect lets pass,
And melts his crown into the common mass.
Health to fair France, and fine regeneration!
But England's is the nobler abdication.

MISCELLANEOUS EPIGRAMS.

ON FAST DAYS.

To name a day for general prayer and fast
Is surely worse than of no sort of use;
For you may see with grief, from first to last,
On *fast*-days people of all ranks are *loose*.

WRITTEN IN A COPY OF "CŒLEBS."

If ever I marry a wife,
I'd marry a landlord's daughter;
For then I may sit in the bar
And drink cold brandy and water.

ON A LATE EMPIRIC OF "BALMY" MEMORY.

His namesake, born of Jewish breeder,
Knew "from the Hyssop to the Cedar;"
But he, unlike the Jewish leader,
Scarce knew the Hyssop from the Cedar.

CUIQUE SUUM.

Adsciscit sibi divitias et opes alienas
Fur, rapiens, spolians, quod mihi, quodque tibi,
Proprium erat, temnens hæc verba, Meumque, Tuumque;
Omne Suum est. Tandem cuique suum tribuit,
Dat laqueo collum; vestes, vah! carnifici dat;
Sese Diabolo, sic bene; Cuique suum.

FOR THE "TABLE BOOK."

LAURA, too partial to her friends' enditing,
Requires from each a pattern of their *writing*.
A weightier trifle Laura might command ;
For who to Laura would refuse his—*hand ?*

THE POETICAL CASK.

(See *New Times*, Oct. 19.)

WITH change of climate manners alter not ;
Transport a drunkard—he'll return a sot.
So lordly Juan, d——d to endless fame,
Went out a *pickle*—and comes back the same.

ON THE "LITERARY GAZETTE."

ON English ground I calculated once
How many block-heads—taking dunce by dunce—
There are *four hundred* (if I don't forget)—
The Readers of the "Literary Gazette."

ON MISS F. A—T—N, OF THE K.T.

FANNY most justly may aspire
To sing among the heavenly quire,
In the blest realms of endless day,
When all the earth hath pass'd away ;
When *Time* itself shall be no more :
—— Aye, *then*, indeed,—but *not before*.

A HORSEY PAIR.

JOHN's wife complains that "John discourses
And thinks of nothing else but horses ;"
Whilst John, a caustic wag,
Says, it is wonderful to see
How thoroughly their tastes agree,—
For, that his wife, as well as he,
Most dearly loves a *K—nag*.

DERBY, 1831.

SATAN IN SEARCH OF A WIFE

Frontispiece to the First Edition (1831)

Satan in Search of a Wife;

WITH THE WHOLE PROCESS OF

HIS COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE,

AND WHO DANCED AT THE WEDDING.

BY

AN EYE WITNESS.

London:
EDWARD MOXON, 64, NEW BOND STREET.

M.DCCC.XXXI

DEDICATION

To delicate bosoms that have sighed over the *Loves of the Angels*, this Poem is with tenderest regard consecrated. It can be no offence to you, dear Ladies, that the author has endeavoured to extend the dominion of your darling passion ; to show Love triumphant in places, to which his advent has been never yet suspected. If one Cecilia drew an Angel down, another may have leave to attract a Spirit upwards ; which, I am sure, was the most desperate adventure of the two. Wonder not at the inferior condition of the agent ; for, if King Cophetua wooed a Beggar Maid, a greater king need not scorn to confess the attractions of a fair Tailor's daughter. The more disproportionate the rank, the more signal is the glory of your sex. Like that of Hecate, a triple empire is now confessed your own. Nor Heaven, nor Earth, nor deepest tracts of Erebus, as Milton hath it, have power to resist your sway. I congratulate your last victory. You have fairly made an Honest Man of the Old One ; and, if your conquest is late, the success must be salutary. The new Benedict has employment enough on his hands to desist from dabbling with the affairs of poor mortals ; he may fairly leave human nature to herself ; and we may sleep for one while at least secure from the attacks of this hitherto restless Old Bachelor. It remains to be seen, whether the world will be much benefited by the change in his condition.

SATAN IN SEARCH OF A WIFE

PART THE FIRST.

I.

THE Devil was sick and queasy of late,
And his sleep and his appetite fail'd him ;
His ears they hung down, and his tail it was clapp'd
Between his poor hoofs, like a dog that's been rapp'd—
None knew what the devil ail'd him.

II.

He tumbled and toss'd on his mattress o' nights,
That was fit for a fiend's disportal ;
For 'twas made of the finest of thistles and thorn,
Which Alecto herself had gather'd in scorn
Of the best down beds that are mortal.

III.

His giantly chest in earthquakes heaved,
With groanings corresponding :
And mincing and few were the words he spoke,
While a sigh, like some delicate whirlwind, broke
From a heart that seem'd desponding.

IV.

Now the Devil an Old Wife had for his Dam,
I think none e'er was older :
Her years—old Parr's were nothing to them ;
And a chicken to her was Methusalem,
You'd say, could you behold her.

V.

She remember'd Chaos a little child,
Strumming upon hand organs ;

At the birth of Old Night a gossip she sat,
The ancientest there, and was godmother at
The christening of the Gorgons.

VI.

Her bones peep'd through a rhinoceros' skin,
Like a mummy's through its cerement;
But she had a mother's heart, and guess'd
What pinch'd her son; whom she thus address'd
In terms that bespoke endearment.

VII.

"What ails my Nicky, my Darling Imp,
My Lucifer bright, my Beelze?
My Pig, my Pug-with-a-curly-tail,
You are not well. Can a mother fail
To see *that* which all Hell see!"

VIII.

"O Mother dear, I am dying, I fear;
Prepare the yew, and the willow,
And the cypress black: for I get no ease
By day or by night for the cursed fleas,
That skip about my pillow."

IX.

"Your pillow is clean, and your pillow-beer,
For I wash'd 'em in Styx last night, son,
And your blankets both, and dried them upon
The brimstony banks of Acheron—
It is not the *fleas* that bite, son."

X.

"O I perish of cold these bitter sharp nights,
The damp like an ague ferrets;
The ice and the frost hath shot into the bone;
And I care not greatly to sleep alone
O' nights—for the fear of Spirits."

XI.

"The weather is warm, my own sweet boy,
And the nights are close and stifling;
And for fearing of Spirits, you cowardly Elf—
Have you quite forgot you're a Spirit yourself?
Come, come, I see you are trifling.

XII.

I wish my Nicky is not in love"——
"O mother, you have nick't it"——
And he turn'd his head aside with a blush—
Not red hot pokers, or crimson plush,
Could half so deep have prick'd it.

XIII.

"These twenty thousand good years or more,"
Quoth he, "on this burning shingle
I have led a lonesome Bachelor's life,
Nor known the comfort of babe or wife—
'Tis a long time to live single."

XIV.

Quoth she, "If a wife is all you want,
I shall quickly dance at your wedding.
I am dry nurse, you know, to the Female Ghosts"—
And she call'd up her charge, and they came in hosts
To do the old Beldam's bidding:

XV.

All who in their lives had been servants of sin—
Adulteress, Wench, Virago—
And Murd'resses old that had pointed the knife
Against a husband's or father's life,
Each one a She Iago.

XVI.

First Jezebel came—no need of paint,
Or dressing, to make her charming;
For the blood of the old prophetical race
Had heighten'd the natural flush of her face
To a pitch 'bove rouge or carmine.

XVII.

Semiramis there low tendered herself,
With all Babel for a dowry:
With Helen, the flower and the bane of Greece—
And bloody Medea next offer'd her fleece,
That was of Hell the Houri.

XVIII.

Clytemnestra, with Joan of Naples, put in ;
Cleopatra, by Antony quicken'd ;
Jocasta, that married where she should not,
Came hand in hand with the Daughters of Lot ;
'Till the Devil was fairly sicken'd.

XIX.

For the Devil himself, a dev'l as he is,
Disapproves unequal matches.
" O Mother," he cried, " dispatch them hence !
No Spirit—I speak it without offence—
Shall have me in her hatches."

XX.

With a wave of her wand they all were gone !
And now came out the slaughter :
" 'Tis none of these that can serve my turn ;
For a wife of flesh and blood I burn—
I'm in love with a Taylor's Daughter.

XXI.

'Tis she must heal the wounds that she made,
'Tis she must be my physician.
O parent mild, stand not my foe "—
For his mother had whisper'd something low
About " matching beneath his condition."—

XXII.

" And then we must get paternal consent,
Or an unblest match may vex ye "—
" Her father is dead ; I fetch'd him away,
In the midst of his goose, last Michaelmas Day—
He died of an apoplexy.

XXIII.

His daughter is fair, and an only heir—
With her I long to tether—
He has left her his *hell*, and all that he had ;
The estates are contiguous, and I shall be mad,
'Till we lay our two Hells together."

XXIV.

" But how do you know the fair maid's mind ? "—
Quoth he, " Her loss was but recent ;
And I could not speak *my* mind you know,
Just when I was fetching her father below—
It would have been hardly decent.

XXV.

But a leer from her eye, where Cupids lie,
Of love gave proof apparent ;
And, from something she dropp'd, I shrewdly ween'd,
In her heart she judged, that a *living Fiend*
Was better than a *dead Parent*.

XXVI.

But the time is short ; and suitors may come,
While I stand here reporting ;
Then make your son a bit of a Beau,
And give me your blessing, before I go
To the other world a courting."

XXVII.

" But what will you do with your horns, my son ?
And that tail—fair maids will mock it "—
" My tail I will dock—and as for the horn,
Like husbands above I think no scorn
To carry it in my pocket."

XXVIII.

"But what will you do with your feet, my son?"
"Here are stockings fairly woven:
My hoofs I will hide in silken hose;
And cinnamon-sweet are my pettitoes—
Because, you know, they are *cloven*."

XXIX.

"Then take a blessing, my darling son,"
Quoth she, and kiss'd him civil—
Then his neckcloth she tied; and when he was drest
From top to toe in his Sunday's best,
He appear'd a comely devil.

XXX.

So his leave he took:—but how he fared
In his courtship—barring failures—
In a Second Part you shall read it soon,
In a bran new song, to be sung to the tune
Of the "Devil among the Tailors."

THESE PREMISES
TO LET

THE SECOND PART;

CONTAINING

THE COURTSHIP, AND THE WEDDING.

I.

WHO is She that by night from her balcony looks
On a garden, where cabbage is springing?
'Tis the Tailor's fair Lass, that we told of above;
She muses by moonlight on her True Love;
So sharp is Cupid's stinging.

II.

She has caught a glimpse of the Prince of the Air
In his Luciferian splendour,
And away with coyness and maiden reserve!—
For none but the Devil her turn will serve,
Her sorrows else will end her.

III.

She saw when he fetch'd her father away,
And the sight no whit did shake her;
For the Devil may sure with his own make free—
And "it saves besides," quoth merrily she,
"The expense of an Undertaker—

IV.

Then come, my Satan, my darling Sin,
Return to my arms, my Hell Beau;
My Prince of Darkness, my crow-black Dove"—
And she scarce had spoke, when her own True Love
Was kneeling at her elbow!

v.

But she wist not at first that this was He,
That had raised such a boiling passion ;
For his old costume he had laid aside,
And was come to court a mortal bride
In a coat-and-waistcoat fashion.

vi.

She miss'd his large horns, and she miss'd his fair tail,
That had hung so retrospective ;
And his raven plumes, and some other marks
Regarding his feet, that had left their sparks
In a mind but too susceptive :

vii.

And she held it scorn that a mortal born
Should the Prince of Spirits rival,
To clamber at midnight her garden fence—
For she knew not else by what pretence
To account for his arrival.

viii.

"What thief art thou," quoth she, "in the dark
That stumblest here presumptuous ?
Some Irish Adventurer I take you to be—
A Foreigner, from your garb I see,
Which besides is not over-sumptuous."

ix.

Then Satan, awhile dissembling his rank,
A piece of amorous fun tries :
Quoth he, "I'm a Netherlander born ;
Fair Virgin, receive not my suit with scorn ;
I'm a Prince in the Low Countries—

x.

Though I travel *incog.* From the Land of Fog
And Mist I am come to proffer
My crown and my sceptre to lay at your feet ;
It is not every day in the week you may meet,
Fair Maid, with a Prince's offer."

xi.

" Your crown and your sceptre I like full well,
They tempt a poor maiden's pride, Sir ;
But your lands and possessions—excuse if I'm rude—
Are too far in a Northerly latitude
For me to become your Bride, Sir.

xii.

In that aguish clime I should catch my death,
Being but a raw new comer "—
Quoth he, " We have plenty of fuel stout ;
And the fires, which I kindle, never go out
In winter, nor yet in summer.

xiii.

I am Prince of Hell, and Lord Paramount
Over Monarchs there abiding.
My Groom of the Stables is Nimrod old ;
And Nebuchadnazor my stirrups must hold,
When I go out a riding.

xiv.

To spare your blushes, and maiden fears,
I resorted to these inventions—
But, Imposture, begone ; and avaunt, Disguise ! "—
And the Devil began to swell and rise
To his own diabolic dimensions.

XV.

Twin horns from his forehead shot up to the moon,
Like a branching stag in Arden ;
Dusk wings through his shoulders with eagle's strength
Push'd out ; and his train lay floundering in length
An acre beyond the garden.—

XVI.

To tender hearts I have framed my lay—
Judge ye, all love-sick Maidens,
When the virgin saw in the soft moonlight,
In his proper proportions, her own true knight,
If she needed long persuadings.

XVII.

Yet a maidenly modesty kept her back,
As her sex's art had taught her :
For "the biggest Fortunes," quoth she, "in the land—
Are not worthy"—then blush'd—"of your Highness's hand—
Much less a poor Taylor's daughter.

XVIII.

There's the two Miss Crockfords are single still,
For whom great suitors hunger ;
And their Father's hell is much larger than mine"—
Quoth the Devil, "I've no such ambitious design,
For their Dad is an old Fishmonger ;

XIX.

And I cannot endure the smell of fish—
I have taken an anti-bias
To their livers, especially since the day
That the Angel smoked my cousin away
From the chaste spouse of Tobias.

XX.

Had my amorous kinsman much longer staid,
The perfume would have seal'd his obit ;
For he had a nicer nose than the wench,

Who cared not a pin for the smother and stench,
In the arms of the Son of Tobit."

XXI.

"I have read it," quoth she, "in Apocryphal Writ"—
And the Devil stoop'd down, and kiss'd her;
Not Jove himself, when he courted in flame,
On Semele's lips, the love-scorch'd Dame,
Impress'd such a burning blister.

XXII.

The fire through her bones and her vitals shot—
"O, I yield, my winsome marrow—
I am thine for life"—and black thunders roll'd—
And she sank in his arms through the garden mould,
With the speed of a red-hot arrow.

XXIII.

Merrily, merrily, ring the bells
From each Pandemonian steeple;

For the Devil hath gotten his beautiful Bride,
And a Wedding Dinner he will provide,
To feast all kinds of people.

XXIV.

Fat bulls of Basan are roasted whole,
Of the breed that ran at David ;
With the flesh of goats, on the sinister side,
That shall stand apart, when the world is tried ;
Fit meat for souls unsaved !

XXV.

The fowl from the spit were the Harpies' brood,
Which the bard sang near Cremona,
With a garnish of bats in their leathern wings imp't ;
And the fish was—two delicate slices crimp't,
Of the whale that swallow'd Jonah.

XXVI.

Then the goblets were crown'd, and a health went round
To the Bride, in a wine like scarlet ;
No earthly vintage so deeply paints,
For 'twas dash'd with a tinge from the blood of the Saints
By the Babylonian Harlot.

XXVII.

No Hebe fair stood Cup Bearer there,
The guests were their own skinkers ;
But Bishop Judas first blest the can,
Who is of all Hell Metropolitan,
And kiss'd it to all the drinkers.

XXVIII.

The feast being ended, to dancing they went,
To a music that did produce a
Most dissonant sound, while a hellish glee
Was sung in parts by the Furies Three ;
And the Devil took out Medusa.

XXIX.

But the best of the sport was to hear his old Dam,
Set up her shrill forlorn pipe—
How the wither'd Beldam hobbled about,
And put the rest of the company out—
For she needs must try a horn-pipe.

XXX.

But the heat, and the press, and the noise, and the din,
Were so great, that, howe'er unwilling,
Our Reporter no longer was able to stay,
But came in his own defence away,
And left the Bride quadrilling.

PLAYS

JOHN WOODVIL

A TRAGEDY

CHARACTERS.

SIR WALTER WOODVIL.
JOHN. } *his sons.*
SIMON. }
LOVEL. } *pretended friends of John.*
GRAY. }
SANDFORD. *Sir Walter's old steward.*
MARGARET. *Orphan ward of Sir Walter.*
FOUR GENTLEMEN. *John's riotous companions.*
SERVANTS.

SCENE—*for the most part at Sir Walter's mansion in* DEVONSHIRE; *at another time in the forest of* SHERWOOD.

TIME—*soon after the* RESTORATION.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE—*A Servant's Apartment in Woodvil Hall.* Servants drinking —*Time, the Morning.*

A Song, by DANIEL.

"*When the King enjoys his own again.*"

Peter. A delicate song. Where did'st learn it, fellow?

Dan. Even there, where thou learnest thy oaths and thy politics—at our master's table.—Where else should a serving-man pick up his poor accomplishments?

Mar. Well spoken, Daniel. O rare Daniel!—his oaths and his politics! excellent!

Fran. And where did'st pick up thy knavery, Daniel?

Peter. That came to him by inheritance. His family have supplied the shire of Devon, time out of mind, with good thieves and bad serving-men. All of his race have come into the world without their conscience.

Mar. Good thieves, and bad serving-men ! Better and better. I marvel what Daniel hath got to say in reply.

Dan. I marvel more when thou wilt say any thing to the purpose, thou shallow serving-man, whose swiftest conceit carries thee no higher than to apprehend with difficulty the stale jests of us thy compeers. When was't ever known to club thy own particular jest among us ?

Mar. Most unkind Daniel, to speak such biting things of me !

Fran. See—if he hath not brought tears into the poor fellow's eyes with the saltness of his rebuke.

Dan. No offence, brother Martin—I mean none. 'Tis true, Heaven gives gifts, and with-holds them. It has been pleased to bestow upon me a nimble invention to the manufacture of a jest ; and upon thee, Martin, an indifferent bad capacity to understand my meaning.

Mar. Is that all ? I am content. Here's my hand.

Fran. Well, I like a little innocent mirth myself, but never could endure bawdry.

Dan. Quot homines tot sententiæ.

Mar. And what is that ?

Dan. 'Tis Greek, and argues difference of opinion.

Mar. I hope there is none between us.

Dan. Here's to thee, brother Martin. (*drinks.*)

Mar. And to thee, Daniel. (*drinks.*)

Fran. And to thee, Peter. (*drinks.*)

Peter. Thank you, Francis. And here's to thee. (*drinks.*)

Mar. I shall be fuddled anon.

Dan. And drunkenness I hold to be a very despicable vice.

All. O ! a shocking vice. (*they drink round.*)

Peter. In as much as it taketh away the understanding.

Dan. And makes the eyes red.

Peter. And the tongue to stammer.

Dan. And to blab out secrets.

(*During this conversation they continue drinking.*)

Peter. Some men do not know an enemy from a friend when they are drunk.

Dan. Certainly sobriety is the health of the soul.

Mar. Now I know I am going to be drunk.

Dan. How can'st tell, dry-bones ?

Mar. Because I begin to be melancholy. That's always a sign.

Fran. Take care of Martin, he'll topple off his seat else. [MARTIN *drops asleep.*

Peter. Times are greatly altered, since young master took upon himself the government of this household.

All. Greatly altered.

Fran. I think every thing be altered for the better since His Majesty's blessed restoration.

Peter. In Sir Walter's days there was no encouragement given to good house-keeping.

All. None.

Dan. For instance, no possibility of getting drunk before two in the afternoon.

Peter. Every man his allowance of ale at breakfast —his quart !

All. A quart ! ! (*in derision.*)

Dan. Nothing left to our own sweet discretions.

Peter. Whereby it may appear, we were treated more like beasts than what we were—discreet and reasonable serving-men.

All. Like beasts.

Mar. (*Opening his eyes.*) Like beasts.

Dan. To sleep, wag-tail!

Fran. I marvel all this while where the old gentleman has found means to secrete himself. It seems no man has heard of him since the day of the King's return. Can any tell why our young master, being favoured by the court, should not have interest to procure his father's pardon?

Dan. Marry, I think 'tis the obstinacy of the old Knight, that will not be beholden to the court for his safety.

Mar. Now that is wilful.

Fran. But can any tell me the place of his concealment?

Peter. That cannot I; but I have my conjectures.

Dan. Two hundred pounds, as I hear, to the man that shall apprehend him.

Fran. Well, I have my suspicions.

Peter. And so have I.

Mar. And I can keep a secret.

Fran. (*to* PETER). Warwickshire, you mean. [*aside.*

Peter. Perhaps not.

Fran. Nearer perhaps.

Peter. I say nothing.

Dan. I hope there is none in this company would be mean enough to betray him.

All. O Lord, surely not.

[*They drink to* SIR WALTER'S *safety.*

Fran. I have often wondered how our master came to be excepted by name in the late Act of Oblivion.

Dan. Shall I tell the reason?

All. Aye, do.

Dan. 'Tis thought he is no great friend to the present happy establishment.

All. O! monstrous!

Peter. Fellow servants, a thought strikes me.—Do we, or do we not, come under the penalties of the

treason-act, by reason of our being privy to this man's concealment?

All. Truly a sad consideration.

To them enters SANDFORD *suddenly.*

Sand. You well-fed and unprofitable grooms,
Maintained for state, not use;
You lazy feasters at another's cost,
That eat like maggots into an estate,
And do as little work,
Being indeed but foul excrescences,
And no just parts in a well-order'd family;
You base and rascal imitators,
Who act up to the height your master's vices,
But cannot read his virtues in your bond:
Which of you, as I enter'd, spake of betraying?
Was it you, or you, or, thin-face, was it you?

Mar. Whom does he call thin-face?

Sand. No prating, loon, but tell me who he was,
That I may brain the villain with my staff,
That seeks Sir Walter's life?
You miserable men,
With minds more slavish than your slave's estate,
Have you that noble bounty so forgot,
Which took you from the looms, and from the ploughs,
Which better had ye follow'd, fed ye, clothed ye,
And entertain'd ye in a worthy service,
Where your best wages was the world's repute,
That thus ye seek his life, by whom ye live?
Have you forgot too,
How often in old times
Your drunken mirths have stunn'd day's sober ears,
Carousing full cups to Sir Walter's health?—
Whom now ye would betray, but that he lies
Out of the reach of your poor treacheries.
This learn from me,
Our master's secret sleeps with trustier tongues,

Than will unlock themselves to carls like you.
Go, get you gone, you knaves. Who stirs? this staff
Shall teach you better manners else.
All. Well, we are going.
Sand. And quickly too, ye had better, for I see
Young mistress Margaret coming this way.
[*Exeunt all but* SANDFORD.

Enter MARGARET, *as in a fright, pursued by a Gentleman, who, seeing* SANDFORD, *retires muttering a curse.*

Sand. Good morrow to my fair mistress. 'Twas a chance
I saw you, lady, so intent was I
On chiding hence these graceless serving-men,
Who cannot break their fast at morning meals
Without debauch and mis-timed riotings.
This house hath been a scene of nothing else
But atheist riot and profane excess,
Since my old master quitted all his rights here.
Marg. Each day I endure fresh insult from the scorn
Of Woodvil's friends, the uncivil jests,
And free discourses, of the dissolute men,
That haunt this mansion, making me their mirth.
Sand. Does my young master know of these affronts?
Marg. I cannot tell. Perhaps he has not been told.
Perhaps he might have seen them if he would.
I have known him more quick-sighted. Let that pass.
All things seem changed, I think. I had a friend,
(I can't but weep to think him alter'd too,)
These things are best forgotten; but I knew
A man, a young man, young, and full of honour,

That would have pick'd a quarrel for a straw,
And fought it out to the extremity,
E'en with the dearest friend he had alive,
On but a bare surmise, a possibility,
That Margaret had suffer'd an affront.
Some are too tame, that were too splenetic once.

Sand. 'Twere best he should be *told* of these affronts.

Marg. I am the daughter of his father's friend,
Sir Walter's orphan ward.
I am not his servant maid, that I should wait
The opportunity of a gracious hearing,
Enquire the times and seasons when to put
My peevish prayer up at young Woodvil's feet,
And sue to him for slow redress, who was
Himself a suitor late to Margaret.
I am somewhat proud: and Woodvil taught me pride.
I was his favourite once, his playfellow in infancy,
And joyful mistress of his youth.
None once so pleasant in his eyes as Margaret.
His conscience, his religion, Margaret was,
His dear heart's confessor, a heart within that heart,
And all dear things summ'd up in her alone.
As Margaret smil'd or frown'd John liv'd or died:
His dress, speech, gesture, studies, friendships, all
Being fashion'd to her liking.
His flatteries taught me first this self-esteem,
His flatteries and caresses, while he loved.
The world esteem'd her happy, who had won
His heart, who won all hearts;
And ladies envied me the love of Woodvil.

Sand. He doth affect the courtier's life too much,
Whose art is to forget,
And that has wrought this seeming change in him,
That was by nature noble.
'Tis these court-plagues, that swarm about our house,

Have done the mischief, making his fancy giddy
With images of state, preferment, place,
Tainting his generous spirit with ambition.
Marg. I know not how it is;
A cold protector is John grown to me.
The mistress, and presumptive wife, of Woodvil
Can never stoop so low to supplicate
A man, her equal, to redress those wrongs,
Which he was bound first to prevent;
But which his own neglects have sanction'd rather,
Both sanction'd and provok'd: a mark'd neglect,
And strangeness fast'ning bitter on his love,
His love which long has been upon the wane.
For me, I am determined what to do:
To leave this house this night, and lukewarm John,
And trust for food to the earth and Providence.
Sand. O lady, have a care
Of these indefinite and spleen-bred resolves.
You know not half the dangers that attend
Upon a life of wand'ring, which your thoughts now,
Feeling the swellings of a lofty anger,
To your abused fancy, as 'tis likely,
Portray without its terrors, painting *lies*
And representments of fallacious liberty—
You know not what it is to leave the roof that shelters you.
Marg. I have thought on every possible event,
The dangers and discouragements you speak of,
Even till my woman's heart hath ceas'd to fear them,
And cowardice grows enamour'd of rare accidents.
Nor am I so unfurnish'd, as you think,
Of practicable schemes.
Sand. Now God forbid; think twice of this, dear lady.
Marg. I pray you spare me, Mr Sandford,
And once for all believe, nothing can shake my purpose.

Sand. But what course have you thought on ?
Marg. To seek Sir Walter in the forest of Sherwood.
I have letters from young Simon,
Acquainting me with all the circumstances
Of their concealment, place, and manner of life,
And the merry hours they spend in the green haunts
Of Sherwood, nigh which place they have ta'en a house
In the town of Nottingham, and pass for foreigners,
Wearing the dress of Frenchmen.—
All which I have perus'd with so attent
And child-like longings, that to my doting ears
Two sounds now seem like one,
One meaning in two words, Sherwood and Liberty.
And, gentle Mr Sandford,
'Tis you that must provide now
The means of my departure, which for safety
Must be in boy's apparel.
Sand. Since you will have it so
(My careful age trembles at all may happen)
I will engage to furnish you.
I have the keys of the wardrobe, and can fit you
With garments to your size.
I know a suit
Of lively Lincoln Green, that shall much grace you
In the wear, being glossy fresh, and worn but seldom.
Young Stephen Woodvil wore them, while he lived.
I have the keys of all this house and passages,
And ere day-break will rise and let you forth.
What things soe'er you have need of I can furnish you ;
And will provide a horse and trusty guide,
To bear you on your way to Nottingham.
Marg. That once this day and night were fairly past !

For then I'll bid this house and love farewell ;
Farewell, sweet Devon ; farewell, lukewarm John ;
For with the morning's light will Margaret be gone.
Thanks, courteous Mr Sandford.—

[*Exeunt divers ways.*

ACT THE SECOND.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Wooavil Hall.*

JOHN WOODVIL—*alone.* (*Reading parts of a letter.*)

"WHEN Love grows cold, and indifference has usurped upon old Esteem, it is no marvel if the world begin to account *that* dependence, which hitherto has been esteemed honorable shelter. The course I have taken (in leaving this house, not easily wrought thereunto,) seemed to me best for the once-for-all releasing of yourself (who in times past have deserved well of me) from the now daily, and not-to-be-endured, tribute of forced love, and ill-dissembled reluctance of affection. MARGARET."

Gone ! gone ! my girl ? so hasty, Margaret !
And never a kiss at parting ? shallow loves,
And likings of a ten days' growth, use courtesies,
And show red eyes at parting. Who bids "farewell"
In the same tone he cries "God speed you, Sir ?"
Or tells of joyful victories at sea,
Where he hath ventures ? does not rather muffle
His organs to emit a leaden sound,
To suit the melancholy dull "farewell,"
Which they in Heaven not use ?—
So peevish, Margaret ?
But 'tis the common error of your sex,
When our idolatry slackens, or grows less,

(As who of woman born can keep his faculty
Of Admiration, being a decaying faculty,
For ever strain'd to the pitch? or can at pleasure
Make it renewable, as some appetites are,
As, namely, Hunger, Thirst?—) this being the case,
They tax us with neglect, and love grown cold,
Coin plainings of the perfidy of men,
Which into maxims pass, and apophthegms
To be retailed in ballads.—
I know them all.
They are jealous, when our larger hearts receive
More guests than one. (Love in a woman's heart
Being all in one.) For me, I am sure I have room here
For more disturbers of my sleep than one.
Love shall have part, but love shall not have all.
Ambition, Pleasure, Vanity, all by turns,
Shall lie in my bed, and keep me fresh and waking;
Yet Love not be excluded.—Foolish wench,
I could have loved her twenty years to come,
And still have kept my liking. But since 'tis so,
Why, fare thee well, old play-fellow! I'll try
To squeeze a tear for old acquaintance' sake.
I shall not grudge so much.——

To him enters LOVEL.

Lovel. Bless us, Woodvil! what is the matter? I protest, man, I thought you had been weeping.

Wood. Nothing is the matter, only the wench has forced some water into my eyes, which will quickly disband.

Lovel. I cannot conceive you.

Wood. Margaret is flown.

Lovel. Upon what pretence?

Wood. Neglect on my part: which it seems she has had the wit to discover, maugre all my pains to conceal it.

Lovel. Then, you confess the charge?

Wood. To say the truth, my love for her has of late stopped short on this side idolatry.

Lovel. As all good Christians' should, I think.

Wood. I am sure, I could have loved her still within the limits of warrantable love.

Lovel. A kind of brotherly affection, I take it.

Wood. We should have made excellent man and wife in time.

Lovel. A good old couple, when the snows fell, to crowd about a sea-coal fire, and talk over old matters.

Wood. While each should feel, what neither cared to acknowledge, that stories oft repeated may, at last, come to lose some of their grace by the repetition.

Lovel. Which both of you may yet live long enough to discover. For, take my word for it, Margaret is a bird that will come back to you without a lure.

Wood. Never, never, Lovel. Spite of my levity, with tears I confess it, she was a lady of most confirmed honour, of unmatchable spirit, and determinate in all virtuous resolutions; not hasty to anticipate an affront, nor slow to feel, where just provocation was given.

Lovel. What made you neglect her, then?

Wood. Mere levity and youthfulness of blood, a malady incident to young men, physicians call it caprice. Nothing else. He, that slighted her, knew her value: and 'tis odds, but, for thy sake, Margaret, John will yet go to his grave a bachelor.

[*A noise heard, as of one drunk and singing.*

Lovel. Here comes one, that will quickly dissipate these humours.

Enter one drunk.

Drunken Man. Good-morrow to you, gentlemen. Mr Lovel, I am your humble servant. Honest Jack Woodvil, I will get drunk with you to-morrow.

Wood. And why to-morrow, honest Mr Freeman?

Drunken Man. I scent a traitor in that question. A beastly question. Is it not his Majesty's birth-day? the day, of all days in the year, on which King Charles the Second was graciously pleased to be born. (*Sings*) "Great pity 'tis such days as those should come but once a year."

Lovel. Drunk in a morning! foh! how he stinks!

Drunken Man. And why not drunk in a morning? can'st tell, bully?

Wood. Because, being the sweet and tender infancy of the day, methinks, it should ill endure such early blightings.

Drunken Man. I grant you, 'tis in some sort the youth and tender nonage of the day. Youth is bashful, and I give it a cup to encourage it. (*Sings*) "Ale that will make Grimalkin prate."—At noon I drink for thirst, at night for fellowship, but, above all, I love to usher in the bashful morning under the auspices of a freshening stoop of liquor. (*Sings*) "Ale in a Saxon rumkin then makes valour burgeon in tall men."—But, I crave pardon. I fear I keep that gentleman from serious thoughts. There be those that wait for me in the cellar.

Wood. Who are they?

Drunken Man. Gentlemen, my good friends, Cleveland, Delaval, and Truby. I know by this time they are all clamorous for me. [*Exit, singing.*

Wood. This keeping of open house acquaints a man with strange companions.

Enter, at another door, Three calling for HARRY FREEMAN.

Harry Freeman, Harry Freeman.
He is not here. Let us go look for him.
Where is Freeman?
Where is Harry?
[*Exeunt the Three, calling for* FREEMAN.

Wood. Did you ever see such gentry? (*laughing*) These are they that fatten on ale and tobacco in a morning, drink burnt brandy at noon to promote digestion, and piously conclude with quart bumpers after supper, to prove their loyalty.

Lovel. Come, shall we adjourn to the Tennis Court?

Wood. No, you shall go with me into the gallery, where I will show you the *Vandyke* I have purchased, "The late King taking leave of his children."

Lovel. I will but adjust my dress, and attend you.

[*Exit* LOVEL.

John Wood. (*alone.*) Now Universal England getteth drunk
For joy that Charles, her monarch, is restored:
And she, that sometime wore a saintly mask,
The stale-grown vizor from her face doth pluck,
And weareth now a suit of morris bells,
With which she jingling goes through all her towns and villages.
The baffled factions in their houses sculk:
The common-wealthsman, and state machinist,
The cropt fanatic, and fifth-monarchy-man,
Who heareth of these visionaries now?
They and their dreams have ended. Fools do sing,
Where good men yield God thanks; but politic spirits,
Who live by observation, note these changes
Of the popular mind, and thereby serve their ends.
Then why not I? What's Charles to me, or Oliver,
But as my own advancement hangs on one of them?
I to myself am chief.——I know,
Some shallow mouths cry out, that I am smit
With the gauds and show of state, the point of place,
And trick of precedence, the ducks, and nods
Which weak minds pay to rank. 'Tis not to sit
In place of worship at the royal masques,

Their pastimes, plays, and Whitehall banquetings,
For none of these,
Nor yet to be seen whispering with some great one,
Do I affect the favours of the court.
I would be great, for greatness hath great *power*,
And that's the fruit I reach at.—
Great spirits ask great play-room. Who could sit,
With these prophetic swellings in my breast,
That prick and goad me on, and never cease,
To the fortunes something tells me I was born to?
Who, with such monitors within to stir him,
Would sit him down, with lazy arms across,
A unit, a thing without a name in the state,
A something to be govern'd, not to govern,
A fishing, hawking, hunting, country gentleman?
[*Exit.*

SCENE.—*Sherwood Forest.*

SIR WALTER WOODVIL. SIMON WOODVIL. (*Disguised as Frenchmen.*)

Sir W. How fares my boy, Simon, my youngest born,
My hope, my pride, young Woodvil, speak to me?
Some grief untold weighs heavy at thy heart:
I know it by thy alter'd cheer of late.
Thinkest, thy brother plays thy father false?
It is a mad and thriftless prodigal,
Grown proud upon the favours of the court;
Court manners, and court fashions, he affects,
And in the heat and uncheck'd blood of youth,
Harbours a company of riotous men,
All hot, and young, court-seekers, like himself,
Most skilful to devour a patrimony;
And these have eat into my old estates,
And these have drain'd thy father's cellars dry;
But these so common faults of youth not named,

(Things which themselves outgrow, left to themselves,)
I know no quality that stains his honour.
My life upon his faith and noble mind,
Son John could never play thy father false.
Simon. I never thought but nobly of my brother,
Touching his honour and fidelity.
Still I could wish him charier of his person,
And of his time more frugal, than to spend
In riotous living, graceless society,
And mirth unpalatable, hours better employ'd
(With those persuasive graces nature lent him)
In fervent pleadings for a father's life.
Sir W. I would not owe my life to a jealous court,
Whose shallow policy I know it is,
On some reluctant acts of prudent mercy,
(Not voluntary, but extorted by the times,
In the first tremblings of new-fixed power,
And recollection smarting from old wounds,)
On these to build a spurious popularity.
Unknowing what free grace or mercy mean,
They fear to punish, therefore do they pardon.
For this cause have I oft forbid my son,
By letters, overtures, open solicitings,
Or closet-tamperings, by gold or fee,
To beg or bargain with the court for my life.
Simon. And John has ta'en you, father, at your word,
True to the letter of his paternal charge.
Sir W. Well, my good cause, and my good conscience, boy,
Shall be for sons to me, if John prove false.
Men die but once, and the opportunity
Of a noble death is not an every-day fortune:
It is a gift which noble spirits pray for.
Simon. I would not wrong my brother by surmise;
I know him generous, full of gentle qualities,

Incapable of base compliances,
No prodigal in his nature, but affecting
This show of bravery for ambitious ends.
He drinks, for 'tis the humour of the court,
And drink may one day wrest the secret from him,
And pluck you from your hiding-place in the sequel.
Sir W. Fair death shall be my doom, and foul life his.
Till when, we'll live as free in this green forest,
As yonder deer, who roam unfearing treason;
Who seem the Aborigines of this place,
Or Sherwood theirs by tenure.
Simon. 'Tis said, that Robert Earl of Huntingdon,
Men call'd him Robin Hood, an outlaw bold,
With a merry crew of hunters here did haunt,
Not sparing the king's venison. May one believe
The antique tale?
Sir W. There is much likelihood,
Such bandits did in England erst abound,
When polity was young. I have read of the pranks
Of that mad archer, and of the tax he levied
On travellers, whatever their degree,
Baron, or knight, whoever pass'd these woods,
Layman, or priest, not sparing the bishop's mitre
For spiritual regards; nay, once, 'tis said,
He robb'd the king himself.
Simon. A perilous man. (*smiling*)
Sir W. How quietly we live here,
Unread in the world's business,
And take no note of all its slippery changes.
'Twere best we make a world among ourselves,
A little world,
Without the ills and falsehoods of the greater;
We too being all the inhabitants of ours,
And kings and subjects both in one.
Simon. Only the dangerous errors, fond conceits,
Which make the business of that greater world,

Must have no place in ours :
As, namely, riches, honours, birth, place, courtesy,
Good fame and bad, rumours and popular noises,
Books, creeds, opinions, prejudices national,
Humours particular,
Soul-killing lies, and truths that work small good,
Feuds, factions, enmities, relationships,
Loves, hatreds, sympathies, antipathies,
And all the intricate stuff quarrels are made of.

MARGARET *enters in boy's apparel.*

Sir W. What pretty boy have we here ?
Marg. Bon jour, messieurs. Ye have handsome English faces,
I should have ta'en ye else for other two,
I came to seek in the forest.
Sir W. Who are they ?
Marg. A gallant brace of Frenchmen, curled monsieurs,
That, men say, haunt these woods, affecting privacy,
More than the manner of their countrymen.
Simon. We have here a wonder.
The face is Margaret's face.
Sir W. The face is Margaret's, but the dress the same
My Stephen sometimes wore. [*To* MARGARET.
Suppose us them ; whom do men say we are ?
Or know you what you seek ?
Marg. A worthy pair of exiles,
Two whom the politics of state revenge,
In final issue of long civil broils,
Have houseless driven from your native France,
To wander idle in these English woods,
Where now ye live ; most part
Thinking on home, and all the joys of France,
Where grows the purple vine.
Sir W. These woods, young stranger,

And grassy pastures, which the slim deer loves,
Are they less beauteous than the land of France,
Where grows the purple vine ?
Marg. I cannot tell.
To an indifferent eye both show alike.
'Tis not the scene,
But all familiar objects in the scene,
Which now ye miss, that constitute a difference.
Ye had a country, exiles, ye have none now ;
Friends had ye, and much wealth, ye now have nothing ;
Our manners, laws, our customs, all are foreign to you,
I know ye loathe them, cannot learn them readily ;
And there is reason, exiles, ye should love
Our English earth less than your land of France,
Where grows the purple vine ; where all delights grow,
Old custom has made pleasant.
Sir W. You, that are read
So deeply in our story, what are you ?
Marg. A bare adventurer ; in brief a woman,
That put strange garments on, and came thus far
To seek an ancient friend :
And having spent her stock of idle words,
And feeling some tears coming,
Hastes now to clasp Sir Walter Woodvil's knees,
And beg a boon for Margaret, his poor ward.
[*kneeling.*
Sir W. Not at my feet, Margaret, not at my feet.
Marg. Yes, till her suit is answer'd.
Sir W. Name it.
Marg. A little boon, and yet so great a grace,
She fears to ask it.
Sir W. Some riddle, Margaret ?
Marg. No riddle, but a plain request.
Sir W. Name it.

Marg. Free liberty of Sherwood,
And leave to take her lot with you in the forest.
Sir W. A scant petition, Margaret, but take it,
Seal'd with an old man's tears.—
Rise, daughter of Sir Rowland.
(*Addresses them both.*)
O you most worthy,
You constant followers of a man proscribed,
Following poor misery in the throat of danger ;
Fast servitors to crazed and penniless poverty,
Serving poor poverty without hope of gain ;
Kind children of a sire unfortunate ;
Green clinging tendrils round a trunk decay'd,
Which needs must bring on you timeless decay ;
Fair living forms to a dead carcase join'd ;—
What shall I say ?
Better the dead were gathered to the dead,
Than death and life in disproportion meet.—
Go, seek your fortunes, children.—
Simon. Why, whither should we go ?
Sir W. *You* to the Court, where now your brother John
Commits a rape on Fortune.
Simon. Luck to John !
A light-heel'd strumpet, when the sport is done.
Sir W. *You* to the sweet society of your equals,
Where the world's fashion smiles on youth and beauty,
Marg. Where young men's flatteries cozen young maids' beauty,
There pride oft' gets the vantage hand of duty,
There sweet humility withers.
Simon. Mistress Margaret,
How fared my brother John, when you left Devon ?
Marg. John was well, Sir.
Simon. 'Tis now nine months almost,
Since I saw home. What new friends has John made ?

Or keeps he his first love ?—I did suspect
Some foul disloyalty. Now do I know,
John has prov'd false to her, for Margaret weeps.
It is a scurvy brother.

Sir W. Fie upon it.
All men are false, I think. The date of love
Is out, expired, its stories all grown stale,
O'erpast, forgotten, like an antique tale
Of Hero and Leander.

Simon. I have known some men that are too general-contemplative for the narrow passion. I am in some sort a *general* lover.

Marg. In the name of the boy God, who plays at hood-man-blind with the Muses, and cares not whom he catches : what is it *you* love ?

Simon. Simply, all things that live,
From the crook'd worm to man's imperial form,
And God-resembling likeness. The poor fly,
That makes short holyday in the sun beam,
And dies by some child's hand. The feeble bird
With little wings, yet greatly venturous
In the upper sky. The fish in th' other element,
That knows no touch of eloquence. What else ?
Yon tall and elegant stag,
Who paints a dancing shadow of his horns
In the water, where he drinks.

Marg. I myself love all these things, yet so as with a difference:—for example, some animals better than others, some men rather than other men ; the nightingale before the cuckoo, the swift and graceful palfrey before the slow and asinine mule. Your humour goes to confound all qualities.
What sports do you use in the forest ?—

Simon. Not many ; some few, as thus :—
To see the sun to bed, and to arise,
Like some hot amourist with glowing eyes,
Bursting the lazy bands of sleep that bound him,

With all his fires and travelling glories round him.
Sometimes the moon on soft night clouds to rest,
Like beauty nestling in a young man's breast,
And all the winking stars, her handmaids, keep
Admiring silence, while those lovers sleep.
Sometimes outstretcht, in very idleness,
Nought doing, saying little, thinking less,
To view the leaves, thin dancers upon air,
Go eddying round ; and small birds, how they fare,
When mother Autumn fills their beaks with corn,
Filch'd from the careless Amalthea's horn ;
And how the woods berries and worms provide
Without their pains, when earth has nought beside
To answer their small wants.
To view the graceful deer come tripping by,
Then stop, and gaze, then turn, they know not why,
Like bashful younkers in society.
To mark the structure of a plant or tree,
And all fair things of earth, how fair they be.
Marg. (*smiling.*) And, afterwards them paint in simile.

Sir W. Mistress Margaret will have need of some refreshment. Please you, we have some poor viands within.

Marg. Indeed I stand in need of them.

Sir W. Under the shade of a thick-spreading tree,
Upon the grass, no better carpeting,
We'll eat our noon-tide meal ; and, dinner done,
One of us shall repair to Nottingham,
To seek some safe night-lodging in the town,
Where you may sleep, while here with us you dwell,
By day, in the forest, expecting better times,
And gentler habitations, noble Margaret.

Simon. Allons, young Frenchman—

Marg. Allons, Sir Englishman. The time has been,
I've studied love-lays in the English tongue,

And been enamour'd of rare poesy :
Which now I must unlearn. Henceforth,
Sweet mother-tongue, old English speech, adieu ;
For Margaret has got new name and language new.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THE THIRD.

SCENE.—*An Apartment of State in Woodvil Hall.—Cavaliers drinking.*

JOHN WOODVIL, LOVEL, GRAY, *and four more.*

John. More mirth, I beseech you, gentlemen—
Mr Gray, you are not merry.—

Gray. More wine, say I, and mirth shall ensue in course. What ! we have not yet above three half-pints a man to answer for. Brevity is the soul of drinking, as of wit. Despatch, I say. More wine. (*fills.*)

1*st Gent.* I entreat you, let there be some order, some method, in our drinkings. I love to lose my reason with my eyes open, to commit the deed of drunkenness with forethought and deliberation. I love to feel the fumes of the liquor gathering here, like clouds.

2*nd Gent.* And I am for plunging into madness at once. Damn order, and method, and steps, and degrees, that he speaks of. Let confusion have her legitimate work.

Lovel. I marvel why the poets, who, of all men, methinks, should possess the hottest livers, and most empyreal fancies, should affect to see such virtues in cold water.

Gray. Virtue in cold water ! ha ! ha ! ha !—

John. Because your poet-born hath an internal wine, richer than lippara or canaries, yet uncrushed

from any grapes of earth, unpressed in mortal wine-presses.

3rd Gent. What may be the name of this wine?

John. It hath as many names as qualities. It is denominated indifferently, wit, conceit, invention, inspiration, but its most royal and comprehensive name is *fancy*.

3rd Gent. And where keeps he this sovereign liquor?

John. Its cellars are in the brain, whence your true poet deriveth intoxication at will; while his animal spirits, catching a pride from the quality and neighbourhood of their noble relative, the brain, refuse to be sustained by wines and fermentations of earth.

3rd Gent. But is your poet-born always tipsy with this liquor?

John. He hath his stoopings and reposes; but his proper element is the sky, and in the suburbs of the empyrean.

3rd Gent. Is your wine-intellectual so exquisite? henceforth, I, a man of plain conceit, will, in all humility, content my mind with canaries.

4th Gent. I am for a song or a catch. When will the catches come on, the sweet wicked catches?

John. They cannot be introduced with propriety before midnight. Every man must commit his twenty bumpers first. We are not yet well roused. Frank Lovel, the glass stands with you.

Lovel. Gentlemen, the Duke. (*fills.*)

All. The Duke. (*they drink.*)

Gray. Can any tell, why his Grace, being a Papist—

John. Pshaw! we will have no questions of state now. Is not this his Majesty's birth-day?

Gray. What follows?

John. That every man should sing, and be joyful, and ask no questions.

2nd Gent. Damn politics, they spoil drinking.

3rd Gent. For certain, 'tis a blessed monarchy.

2nd Gent. The cursed fanatic days we have seen ! The times have been when swearing was out of fashion.

3rd Gent. And drinking.

1st Gent. And wenching.

Gray. The cursed yeas and forsooths, which we have heard uttered, when a man could not rap out an innocent oath, but strait the air was thought to be infected.

Lovel. 'Twas a pleasant trick of the saint, which that trim puritan *Swear-not-at-all Smooth-speech* used, when his spouse chid him with an oath for committing with his servant maid, to cause his house to be fumigated with burnt brandy, and ends of scripture, to disperse the devil's breath, as he termed it.

All. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Gray. But 'twas pleasanter, when the other saint *Resist-the-devil-and-he-will-flee-from-thee Pure-man* was overtaken in the act, to plead an illusio visûs, and maintain his sanctity upon a supposed power in the adversary to counterfeit the shapes of things.

All. Ha ! ha ! ha !

John. Another round, and then let every man devise what trick he can in his fancy, for the better manifesting our loyalty this day.

Gray. Shall we hang a puritan ?

John. No, that has been done already in Coleman-Street.

2nd Gent. Or fire a conventicle ?

John. That is stale too.

3rd Gent. Or burn the assembly's catechism ?

4th Gent. Or drink the king's health, every man standing upon his head naked ?

John (*to Lovel*). We have here some pleasant madness.

3rd Gent. Who shall pledge me in a pint bumper, while we drink to the king upon our knees ?

Lovel. Why on our knees, Cavalier ?

John (*smiling*). For more devotion, to be sure. (*to a servant.*) Sirrah, fetch the gilt goblets.

[*The goblets are brought. They drink the King's health, kneeling. A shout of general approbation following the first appearance of the goblets.*

John. We have here the unchecked virtues of the grape. How the vapours curl upwards ! It were a life of gods to dwell in such an element : to see, and hear, and talk brave things. Now fie upon these casual potations. That a man's most exalted reason should depend upon the ignoble fermenting of a fruit, which sparrows pluck at well as we !

Gray (*aside to Lovel.*) Observe how he is ravished.

Lovel. Vanity and gay thoughts of wine do meet in him and engender madness.

[*While the rest are engaged in a wild kind of talk,* JOHN *advances to the front of the stage and soliloquises.*

John. My spirits turn to fire, they mount so fast.
My joys are turbulent, my hopes show like fruition.
These high and gusty relishes of life, sure,
Have no allayings of mortality in them.
I am too hot now, and o'ercapable,
For the tedious processes, and creeping wisdom,
Of human acts, and enterprises of a man.
I want some seasonings of adversity,
Some strokes of the old mortifier Calamity,
To take these swellings down, divines call vanity.

1st Gent. Mr Woodvil, Mr Woodvil.

2nd Gent. Where is Woodvil ?

Gray. Let him alone. I have seen him in these

lunes before. His abstractions must not taint the good mirth.

John (*continuing to soliloquise*). O for some friend now,
To conceal nothing from, to have no secrets.
How fine and noble a thing is confidence,
How reasonable too, and almost godlike!
Fast cement of fast friends, band of society,
Old natural go-between in the world's business,
Where civil life and order, wanting this cement,
Would presently rush back
Into the pristine state of singularity,
And each man stand alone.

(*A servant enters.*)

Servant. Gentlemen, the fire-works are ready.

1st Gent. What be they?

Lovel. The work of London artists, which our host has provided in honour of this day.

2nd Gent. 'Sdeath, who would part with his wine for a rocket?

Lovel. Why truly, gentlemen, as our kind host has been at the pains to provide this spectacle, we can do no less than be present at it. It will not take up much time. Every man may return fresh and thirsting to his liquor.

3rd Gent. There is reason in what he says.

2nd Gent. Charge on then, bottle in hand. There's husbandry in that.

[*They go out, singing. Only* LOVEL *remains, who observes* WOODVIL.

John (*still talking to himself*). This Lovel here's of a tough honesty,
Would put the rack to the proof. He is not of that sort

Which haunt my house, snorting the liquors,
And when their wisdoms are afloat with wine,
Spend vows as fast as vapours, which go off
Even with the fumes, their fathers. He is one,
Whose sober morning actions
Shame not his o'ernight's promises;
Talks little, flatters less, and makes no promises;
Why this is he, whom the dark-wisdom'd fate
Might trust her counsels of predestination with,
And the world be no loser.
Why should I fear this man? [*Seeing* LOVEL.
Where is the company gone?

Lovel. To see the fireworks, where you will be expected to follow. But I perceive you are better engaged.

John. I have been meditating this half-hour
On all the properties of a brave friendship,
The mysteries that are in it, the noble uses,
Its limits withal, and its nice boundaries.
Exempli gratia, how far a man
May lawfully forswear himself for his friend;
What quantity of lies, some of them brave ones,
He may lawfully incur in a friend's behalf;
What oaths, blood-crimes, hereditary quarrels,
Night brawls, fierce words, and duels in the morning,
He need not stick at, to maintain his friend's honour, or his cause.

Lovel. I think many men would die for their friends.

John. Death! why 'tis nothing. We go to it for sport,
To gain a name, or purse, or please a sullen humour,
When one has worn his fortune's livery threadbare,
Or his spleen'd mistress frowns. Husbands will venture on it,
To cure the hot fits and cold shakings of jealousy.
A friend, sir, must do more.

Lovel. Can he do more than die?

John. To serve a friend this he may do. Pray mark me.
Having a law within (great spirits feel one)
He cannot, ought not to be bound by any
Positive laws or ord'nances extern,
But may reject all these: by the law of friendship
He may do so much, be they, indifferently,
Penn'd statutes, or the land's unwritten usages,
As public fame, civil compliances,
Misnamed honour, trust in matter of secrets,
All vows and promises, the feeble mind's religion,
(Binding our morning knowledge to approve
What last night's ignorance spake);
The ties of blood withal, and prejudice of kin.
Sir, these weak terrors
Must never shake me. I know what belongs
To a worthy friendship. Come, you shall have my confidence.

Lovel. I hope you think me worthy.

John. You will smile to hear now—
Sir Walter never has been out of the island.

Lovel. You amaze me.

John. That same report of his escape to France
Was a fine tale, forg'd by myself—
Ha! ha!
I knew it would stagger him.

Lovel. Pray, give me leave.
Where has he dwelt, how liv'd, how lain conceal'd?
Sure I may ask so much.

John. From place to place, dwelling in no place long,
My brother Simon still hath borne him company,
('Tis a brave youth, I envy him all his virtues.)
Disguis'd in foreign garb, they pass for Frenchmen,
Two Protestant exiles from the Limosin
Newly arriv'd. Their dwelling's now at Nottingham,
Where no soul knows them.

Lovel. Can you assign any reason, why a gentle-

man of Sir Walter's known prudence should expose his person so lightly ?

John. I believe, a certain fondness,
A child-like cleaving to the land that gave him birth,
Chains him like fate.

Lovel. I have known some exiles thus
To linger out the term of the law's indulgence,
To the hazard of being known.

John. You may suppose sometimes
They use the neighb'ring Sherwood for their sport,
Their exercise and freer recreation.—
I see you smile. Pray now, be careful.

Lovel. I am no babbler, sir ; you need not fear me.

John. But some men have been known to talk in their sleep,
And tell fine tales that way.

Lovel. I have heard so much. But, to say truth, I mostly sleep alone.

John. Or drink, sir ? do you never drink too freely ?
Some men will drink, and tell you all their secrets.

Lovel. Why do you question me, who know my habits ?

John. I think you are no sot,
No tavern-troubler, worshipper of the grape ;
But all men drink sometimes,
And veriest saints at festivals relax,
The marriage of a friend, or a wife's birth-day.

Lovel. How much, sir, may a man with safety drink ? [*smiling.*

John. Sir, three half pints a day is reasonable ;
I care not if you never exceed that quantity.

Lovel. I shall observe it ;
On holidays two quarts.

John. Or stay ; you keep no wench ?

Lovel. Ha !

John. No painted mistress for your private hours ?
You keep no whore, sir ?

Lovel. What does he mean ?
John. Who for a close embrace, a toy of sin,
And amorous praising of your worship's breath,
In rosy junction of four melting lips,
Can kiss out secrets from you ?
Lovel. How strange this passionate behaviour shows in you !
Sure you think me some weak one.
John. Pray pardon me some fears.
You have now the pledge of a dear father's life.
I am a son—would fain be thought a loving one ;
You may allow me some fears : do not despise me,
If, in a posture foreign to my spirit,
And by our well-knit friendship I conjure you,
Touch not Sir Walter's life. [*kneels.*
You see these tears. My father's an old man.
Pray let him live.
Lovel. I must be bold to tell you, these new freedoms
Show most unhandsome in you.
John (*rising.*) Ha ! do you say so ?
Sure, you are not grown proud upon my secret !
Ah ! now I see it plain. He would be babbling.
No doubt a garrulous and hard-fac'd traitor—
But I'll not give you leave. [*draws.*
Lovel. What does this madman mean ?
John. Come, sir ; here is no subterfuge.
You must kill me, or I kill you.
Lovel (*drawing.*) Then self-defence plead my excuse.
Have at you, sir. [*they fight.*
John. Stay, sir.
I hope you have made your will.
If not, 'tis no great matter.
A broken cavalier has seldom much
He can bequeath : an old worn peruke,
A snuff-box with a picture of Prince Rupert,

A rusty sword he'll swear was used at Naseby,
Though it ne'er came within ten miles of the place;
And, if he's very rich,
A cheap edition of the *Icon Basilike*,
Is mostly all the wealth he dies possest of.
You say few prayers, I fancy;—
So to it again. [*they fight again.* LOVEL *is disarmed.*
Lovel. You had best now take my life. I guess you mean it.
John (*musing.*) No:—Men will say I fear'd him, if I kill'd him.
Live still, and be a traitor in thy wish,
But never act thy thought, being a coward.
That vengeance, which thy soul shall nightly thirst for,
And this disgrace I've done you cry aloud for,
Still have the will without the power to execute.
So now I leave you,
Feeling a sweet security. No doubt
My secret shall remain a virgin for you!—
[*Goes out, smiling in scorn.*
Lovel (*rising.*) For once you are mistaken in your man.
The deed you wot of shall forthwith be done.
A bird let loose, a secret out of hand,
Returns not back. Why, then 'tis baby policy
To menace him who hath it in his keeping.
I will go look for Gray;
Then, northward ho! such tricks as we shall play
Have not been seen, I think, in merry Sherwood,
Since the days of Robin Hood, that archer good.

ACT THE FOURTH.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Woodvil Hall.*

JOHN WOODVIL. (*Alone.*)

A weight of wine lies heavy on my head,
The unconcocted follies of last night.

Now all those jovial fancies, and bright hopes,
Children of wine, go off like dreams.
This sick vertigo here
Preacheth of temperance, no sermon better.
These black thoughts, and dull melancholy,
That stick like burrs to the brain, will they ne'er leave me?
Some men are full of choler, when they are drunk;
Some brawl of matter foreign to themselves;
And some, the most resolved fools of all,
Have told their dearest secrets in their cups.

SCENE.—*The Forest.*

SIR WALTER. SIMON. LOVEL. GRAY.

Lovel. Sir, we are sorry we cannot return your *French* salutation.

Gray. Nor otherwise consider this garb you trust to than as a poor disguise.

Lovel. Nor use much ceremony with a traitor.

Gray. Therefore without much induction of superfluous words, I attach you, Sir Walter Woodvil, of High Treason, in the King's name.

Lovel. And of taking part in the great Rebellion against our late lawful Sovereign, Charles the First.

Simon. John has betrayed us, father.

Lovel. Come, Sir, you had best surrender fairly. We know you, Sir.

Simon. Hang ye, villains, ye are two better known than trusted. I have seen those faces before. Are ye not two beggarly retainers, trencher-parasites, to John? I think ye rank above his footmen. A sort of bed and board worms—locusts that infest our house; a leprosy that long has hung upon its walls and princely apartments, reaching to fill all the corners of my brother's once noble heart.

Gray. We are his friends.

Simon. Fie, sir, do not weep. How these rogues will triumph! Shall I whip off their heads, father? [*draws.*

Lovel. Come, sir, though this shew handsome in you, being his son, yet the law must have its course.

Simon. And if I tell you the law shall not have its course, cannot ye be content? Courage, father; shall such things as these apprehend a man? Which of ye will venture upon me?—Will you, Mr Constable self-elect? or you, Sir, with a pimple on your nose, got at Oxford by hard drinking, your only badge of loyalty?

Gray. 'Tis a brave youth—I cannot strike at him.

Simon. Father, why do you cover your face with your hands? Why do you fetch your breath so hard? See, villains, his heart is burst! O villains, he cannot speak. One of you run for some water: quickly, ye knaves; will ye have your throats cut? [*They both slink off.*

How is it with you, Sir Walter? Look up, Sir, the villains are gone. He hears me not, and this deep disgrace of treachery in his son hath touched him even to the death. O most distuned, and distempered world, where sons talk their aged fathers into their graves! Garrulous and diseased world, and still empty, rotten and hollow *talking* world, where good men decay, states turn round in an endless mutability, and still for the worse, nothing is at a stay, nothing abides but vanity, chaotic vanity.—Brother, adieu!

There lies the parent stock which gave us life,
Which I will see consign'd with tears to earth.
Leave thou the solemn funeral rites to me,
Grief and a true remorse abide with thee.
[*Bears in the body.*

SCENE.—*Another Part of the Forest.*

Marg. (*alone.*) It was an error merely, and no crime,
An unsuspecting openness in youth,
That from his lips the fatal secret drew,
Which should have slept like one of nature's mysteries,
Unveil'd by any man.
Well, he is dead!
And what should Margaret do in the forest?
O ill-starr'd John!
O Woodvil, man enfeoffed to despair!
Take thy farewell of peace.
O never look again to see good days,
Or close thy lids in comfortable nights,
Or ever think a happy thought again,
If what I have heard be true.—
Forsaken of the world must Woodvil live,
If he did tell these men.
No tongue must speak to him, no tongue of man
Salute him, when he wakes up in a morning;
Or bid "good night" to John. Who seeks to live
In amity with thee, must for thy sake
Abide the world's reproach. What then?
Shall Margaret join the clamours of the world
Against her friend? O undiscerning world,
That cannot from misfortune separate guilt,
No, not in thought! O never, never, John.
Prepar'd to share the fortunes of her friend
For better or for worse thy Margaret comes,
To pour into thy wounds a healing love,
And wake the memory of an ancient friendship.
And pardon me, thou spirit of Sir Walter,
Who, in compassion to the wretched living,
Have but few tears to waste upon the dead.

SCENE.—*Woodvil Hall.*

SANDFORD. MARGARET. (*As from a journey.*)

Sand. The violence of the sudden mischance hath so wrought in him, who by nature is allied to nothing *less* than a self-debasing humour of dejection, that I have never seen any thing more changed and spirit-broken. He hath, with a peremptory resolution, dismissed the partners of his riots and late hours, denied his house and person to their most earnest solicitings, and will be seen by none. He keeps ever alone, and his grief (which is solitary) does not so much seem to possess and govern in him, as it is by him, with a wilfulness of most manifest affection, entertained and cherished.

Marg. How bears he up against the common rumour?

Sand. With a strange indifference, which whosoever dives not into the niceness of his sorrow might mistake for obdurate and insensate. Yet are the wings of his pride for ever clipt; and yet a virtuous predominance of filial grief is so ever uppermost, that you may discover his thoughts less troubled with conjecturing what living opinions will say, and judge of his deeds, than absorbed and buried with the dead, whom his indiscretion made so.

Marg. I knew a greatness ever to be resident in him, to which the admiring eyes of men should look up even in the declining and bankrupt state of his pride. Fain would I see him, fain talk with him; but that a sense of respect, which is violated, when without deliberation we press into the society of the unhappy, checks and holds me back. How, think you, he would bear my presence?

Sand. As of an assured friend, whom in the forgetfulness of his fortunes he past by. See him you

must; but not tonight. The newness of the sight shall move the bitterest compunction and the truest remorse; but afterwards, trust me, dear lady, the happiest effects of a returning peace, and a gracious comfort, to him, to you, and all of us.

Marg. I think he would not deny me. He hath ere this received farewell letters from his brother, who hath taken a resolution to estrange himself, for a time, from country, friends, and kindred, and to seek occupation for his sad thoughts in travelling in foreign places, where sights remote and extern to himself may draw from him kindly and not painful ruminations.

Sand. I was present at the receipt of the letter. The contents seemed to affect him, for a moment, with a more lively passion of grief than he has at any time outwardly shewn. He wept with many tears (which I had not before noted in him) and appeared to be touched with the sense as of some unkindness; but the cause of their sad separation and divorce quickly recurring, he presently returned to his former inwardness of suffering.

Marg. The reproach of his brother's presence at this hour should have been a weight more than could be sustained by his already oppressed and sinking spirit.—Meditating upon these intricate and wide-spread sorrows, hath brought a heaviness upon me, as of sleep. How goes the night?

Sand. An hour past sun-set. You shall first refresh your limbs (tired with travel) with meats and some cordial wine, and then betake your no less wearied mind to repose.

Marg. A good rest to us all.

Sand. Thanks, lady.

ACT THE FIFTH.

JOHN WOODVIL (*dressing.*)

John. How beautiful, (*handling his mourning.*)
And comely do these mourning garments shew!
Sure Grief hath set his sacred impress here,
To claim the world's respect! they note so feelingly
By outward types the serious man within.—
Alas! what part or portion can I claim
In all the decencies of virtuous sorrow,
Which other mourners use? as namely,
This black attire, abstraction from society,
Good thoughts, and frequent sighs, and seldom smiles,
A cleaving sadness native to the brow,
All sweet condolements of like-grieved friends,
(That steal away the sense of loss almost)
Men's pity, and good offices
Which enemies themselves do for us then,
Putting their hostile disposition off,
As we put off our high thoughts and proud looks.
[*Pauses, and observes the pictures.*
These pictures must be taken down:
The portraitures of our most antient family
For nigh three hundred years! How have I listen'd,
To hear Sir Walter, with an old man's pride,
Holding me in his arms, a prating boy,
And pointing to the pictures where they hung,
Repeat by course their worthy histories,
(As Hugh de Widville, Walter, first of the name,
And Anne the handsome, Stephen, and famous John:
Telling me, I must be his famous John.)
But that was in old times.
Now, no more
Must I grow proud upon our house's pride.

I rather, I, by most unheard-of crimes,
Have backward tainted all their noble blood,
Rased out the memory of an ancient family,
And quite revers'd the honors of our house.
Who now shall sit and tell us anecdotes?
The secret history of his own times,
And fashions of the world when he was young:
How England slept out three and twenty years,
While Carr and Villiers rul'd the baby king:
The costly fancies of the pedant's reign,
Balls, feastings, huntings, shows in allegory,
And Beauties of the court of James the First.

MARGARET *enters.*

John. Comes Margaret here to witness my disgrace?
O, lady, I have suffer'd loss,
And diminution of my honor's brightness.
You bring some images of old times, Margaret,
That should be now forgotten.

Marg. Old times should never be forgotten, John.
I came to talk about them with my friend.

John. I did refuse you, Margaret, in my pride.

Marg. If John rejected Margaret in his pride,
(As who does not, being splenetic, refuse
Sometimes old play-fellows,) the spleen being gone,
The offence no longer lives.
O Woodvil, those were happy days,
When we two first began to love. When first,
Under pretence of visiting my father,
(Being then a stripling nigh upon my age)
You came a wooing to his daughter, John.
Do you remember,
With what a coy reserve and seldom speech,
(Young maidens must be chary of their speech,)
I kept the honors of my maiden pride?
I was your favourite then.

John. O Margaret, Margaret!
These your submissions to my low estate,
And cleavings to the fates of sunken Woodvil,
Write bitter things 'gainst my unworthiness.
Thou perfect pattern of thy slander'd sex,
Whom miseries of mine could never alienate,
Nor change of fortune shake; whom injuries,
And slights (the worst of injuries) which moved
Thy nature to return scorn with like scorn,
Then when you left in virtuous pride this house,
Could not so separate, but now in this
My day of shame, when all the world forsake me,
You only visit me, love, and forgive me.

Marg. Dost yet remember the green arbour, John,
In the south gardens of my father's house,
Where we have seen the summer sun go down,
Exchanging true love's vows without restraint?
And that old wood, you call'd your wilderness,
And vow'd in sport to build a chapel in it,
There dwell

> "Like hermit poor
> "In pensive place obscure,

And tell your Ave Maries by the curls
(Dropping like golden beads) of Margaret's hair;
And make confession seven times a day
Of every thought that stray'd from love and Margaret;
And I your saint the penance should appoint—
Believe me, sir, I will not now be laid
Aside, like an old fashion.

John. O lady, poor and abject are my thoughts,
My pride is cured, my hopes are under clouds,
I have no part in any good man's love,
In all earth's pleasures portion have I none,
I fade and wither in my own esteem,

This earth holds not alive so poor a thing as I am.
I was not always thus. [*weeps.*
Marg. Thou noble nature,
Which lion-like didst awe the inferior creatures,
Now trampled on by beasts of basest quality,
My dear heart's lord, life's pride, soul-honor'd John!
Upon her knees (regard her poor request)
Your favourite, once-beloved Margaret, kneels.
John. What would'st thou, lady, ever honor'd Margaret?
Marg. That John would think more nobly of himself,
More worthily of high heaven;
And not for one misfortune, child of chance,
No crime, but unforeseen, and sent to punish
The less offence with image of the greater,
Thereby to work the soul's humility,
(Which end hath happily not been frustrate quite,)
O not for one offence mistrust heaven's mercy,
Nor quit thy hope of happy days to come—
John yet has many happy days to live;
To live and make atonement.
John. Excellent lady,
Whose suit hath drawn this softness from my eyes,
Not the world's scorn, nor falling off of friends
Could ever do. Will you go with me, Margaret?
Marg. (*rising.*) Go whither, John?
John. Go in with me,
And pray for the peace of our unquiet minds?
Marg. That I will, John. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An inner Apartment.*

JOHN *is discovered kneeling.*—MARGARET *standing over him.*

John (*rises.*) I cannot bear
To see you waste that youth and excellent beauty,

('Tis now the golden time of the day with you,)
In tending such a broken wretch as I am.
Marg. John will break Margaret's heart, if he speak so.
O sir, sir, sir, you are too melancholy,
And I must call it caprice. I am somewhat bold
Perhaps in this. But you are now my patient,
(You know you gave me leave to call you so,)
And I must chide these pestilent humours from you.
John. They are gone.—
Mark, love, how chearfully I speak!
I can smile too, and I almost begin
To understand what kind of creature Hope is.
Marg. Now this is better, this mirth becomes you, John.
John. Yet tell me, if I over-act my mirth.
(Being but a novice, I may fall into that error,)
That were a sad indecency, you know.
Marg. Nay, never fear.
I will be mistress of your humours,
And you shall frown or smile by the book.
And herein I shall be most peremptory,
Cry, "This shews well, but that inclines to levity;
This frown has too much of the Woodvil in it,
But that fine sunshine has redeem'd it quite."
John. How sweetly Margaret robs me of myself!
Marg. To give you in your stead a better self!
Such as you were, when these eyes first beheld
You mounted on your sprightly steed, White Margery,
Sir Rowland my father's gift,
And all my maidens gave my heart for lost.
I was a young thing then, being newly come
Home from my convent education, where

JOHN *is discovered kneeling*

Seven years I had wasted in the bosom of France :
Returning home true protestant, you call'd me
Your little heretic nun. How timid-bashful
Did John salute his love, being newly seen.
Sir Rowland term'd it a rare modesty,
And prais'd it in a youth.

John. Now Margaret weeps herself.

(*A noise of bells heard.*)

Marg. Hark the bells, John.

John. Those are the church bells of St Mary Ottery.

Marg. I know it.

John. St Mary Ottery, my native village
In the sweet shire of Devon.
Those are the bells.

Marg. Wilt go to church, John ?

John. I have been there already.

Marg. How canst say thou hast been there already ? The bells are only now ringing for morning service, and hast thou been at church already ?

John. I left my bed betimes, I could not sleep,
And when I rose, I look'd (as my custom is)
From my chamber window, where I can see the sun rise ;
And the first object I discern'd
Was the glistering spire of St Mary Ottery.

Marg. Well, John.

John. Then I remember'd 'twas the sabbath-day.
Immediately a wish arose in my mind,
To go to church and pray with Christian people.
And then I check'd myself, and said to myself,
" Thou hast been a heathen, John, these two years past,
(Not having been at church in all that time,)
And is it fit, that now for the first time

Thou should'st offend the eyes of Christian people
With a murderer's presence in the house of prayer?
Thou would'st but discompose their pious thoughts,
And do thyself no good: for how could'st thou pray,
With unwash'd hands, and lips unus'd to the offices?"
And then I at my own presumption smiled;
And then I wept that I should smile at all,
Having such cause of grief! I wept outright;
Tears like a river flooded all my face,
And I began to pray, and found I could pray;
And still I yearn'd to say my prayers in the church.
"Doubtless (said I) one might find comfort in it."
So stealing down the stairs, like one that fear'd detection,
Or was about to act unlawful business
At that dead time of dawn,
I flew to the church, and found the doors wide open.
(Whether by negligence I knew not,
Or some peculiar grace to me vouchsaf'd,
For all things felt like mystery.)

Marg. Yes.

John. So entering in, not without fear,
I past into the family pew,
And covering up my eyes for shame,
And deep perception of unworthiness,
Upon the little hassock knelt me down,
Where I so oft had kneel'd,
A docile infant by Sir Walter's side;
And, thinking so, I wept a second flood
More poignant than the first;
But afterwards was greatly comforted.
It seem'd, the guilt of blood was passing from me
Even in the act and agony of tears,
And all my sins forgiven.

THE WITCH

A DRAMATIC SKETCH OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

CHARACTERS.

OLD SERVANT *in the Family of* SIR FRANCIS FAIRFORD. STRANGER.

Servant. One summer night Sir Francis, as it chanced,
Was pacing to and fro in the avenue
That westward fronts our house,
Among those aged oaks, said to have been planted
Three hundred years ago,
By a neighb'ring prior of the Fairford name.
Being o'ertask'd in thought, he heeded not
The importunate suit of one who stood by the gate,
And begged an alms.
Some say he shoved her rudely from the gate
With angry chiding; but I can never think
(Our master's nature hath a sweetness in it)
That he could use a woman, an old woman,
With such discourtesy: but he refused her—
And better had he met a lion in his path
Than that old woman that night;
For she was one who practised the black arts,
And served the devil, being since burnt for witchcraft.
She looked at him as one that meant to blast him,
And with a frightful noise,
('Twas partly like a woman's voice,
And partly like the hissing of a snake,)
She nothing said but this:—
(Sir Francis told the words.)

A mischief, mischief, mischief,
And a nine-times killing curse,
By day and by night, to the caitiff wight,
Who shakes the poor like snakes from his door,
And shuts up the womb of his purse.

And still she cried—

> A mischief,
> And a nine-fold withering curse:
> For that shall come to thee that will undo thee,
> Both all that thou fearest and worse.

So saying, she departed,
Leaving Sir Francis like a man, beneath
Whose feet a scaffolding was suddenly falling;
So he described it.

Stranger. A terrible curse! What followed?

Servant. Nothing immediate, but some two months after
Young Philip Fairford suddenly fell sick,
And none could tell what ailed him; for he lay,
And pined, and pined, till all his hair fell off,
And he, that was full-fleshed, became as thin
As a two-months' babe that has been starved in the nursing.
And sure I think
He bore his death-wound like a little child;
With such rare sweetness of dumb melancholy
He strove to clothe his agony in smiles,
Which he would force up in his poor pale cheeks,
Like ill-timed guests that had no proper dwelling there;
And, when they asked him his complaint, he laid
His hand upon his heart to show the place,
Where Susan came to him a-nights, he said,
And prick'd him with a pin.—
And thereupon Sir Francis called to mind
The beggar-witch that stood by the gateway
And begged an alms.

Stranger. But did the witch confess?

Servant. All this and more at her death.

Stranger. I do not love to credit tales of magic.
Heaven's music, which is Order, seems unstrung,
And this brave world
(The mystery of God) unbeautified,
Disorder'd, marr'd, where such strange things are acted.

MR H——,

A FARCE, IN TWO ACTS.

AS IT WAS PERFORMED AT DRURY LANE THEATRE, DECEMBER 1806.

"Mr H——, thou wert DAMNED. Bright shone the morning on the play-bills that announced thy appearance, and the streets were filled with the buzz of persons asking one another if they would go to see Mr H——, and answering that they would certainly; but before night the gaiety, not of the author, but of his friends and the town, was eclipsed, for thou wert DAMNED! Hadst thou been anonymous, thou haply mightst have lived. But thou didst come to an untimely end for thy tricks, and for want of a better name to pass them off——."—*Theatrical Examiner.*

CHARACTERS.

MR H—— . . .	*Mr Elliston.*
BELVIL	*Mr Bartley.*
LANDLORD PRY . . .	*Mr Wewitzer.*
MELESINDA . . .	*Miss Mellon.*
MAID TO MELESINDA . .	*Mrs Harlowe.*

Gentlemen, Ladies, Waiters, Servants, &c.

Scene,—BATH.

PROLOGUE, SPOKEN BY MR ELLISTON.

IF we have sinn'd in paring down a name,
All civil well-bred authors do the same.
Survey the columns of our daily writers—
You'll find that some Initials are great fighters.
How fierce the shock, how fatal is the jar,
When Ensign W. meets Lieutenant R.
With two stout seconds, just of their own gizzard,
Cross Captain X. and rough old General Izzard!
Letter to Letter spreads the dire alarms,
Till half the Alphabet is up in arms.
Nor with less lustre have Initials shone,
To grace the gentler annals of Crim. Con.
Where the dispensers of the public lash
Soft penance give; a letter and a dash—
Where vice reduced in size shrinks to a failing,
And loses half her grossness by curtailing.

Faux pas are told in such a modest way,—
"The affair of Colonel B— with Mrs A—"
You must forgive them—for what is there, say,
Which such a pliant Vowel must not grant
To such a very pressing Consonant?
Or who poetic justice dares dispute,
When, mildly melting at a lover's suit,
The wife's a Liquid, her good man a Mute?
Even in the homelier scenes of honest life,
The coarse-spun intercourse of man and wife,
Initials I am told have taken place
Of Deary, Spouse, and that old-fashioned race;
And Cabbage, ask'd by brother Snip to tea,
Replies "I'll come,—but it don't rest with me—
I always leaves them things to Mrs C."
O should this mincing fashion ever spread
From names of living heroes to the dead,
How would Ambition sigh, and hang the head,
As each lov'd syllable should melt away—
Her Alexander turned into Great A—
A single C. her Cæsar to express—
Her Scipio shrunk into a Roman S—
And, nick'd and dock'd to these new modes of speech,
Great Hannibal himself a Mr H——.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A Public Room in an Inn. Landlord, Waiters, Gentlemen, &c.*

Enter MR H.

Mr H. Landlord, has the man brought home my boots?

Landlord. Yes, Sir.

Mr H. You have paid him?

Landlord. There is the receipt, Sir, only not quite filled up, no name, only blank—"Blank, Dr. to Zekiel Spanish for one pair best hessians." Now, Sir, he wishes to know what name he shall put in, who he shall say "Dr."

Mr H. Why, Mr H. to be sure.

Landlord. So I told him, Sir; but Zekiel has some qualms about it. He says, he thinks that Mr H. only would not stand good in law.

Mr H. Rot his impertinence, bid him put in Nebuchadnezzar, and not trouble me with his scruples.

Landlord. I shall, Sir. [*Exit.*

Enter a Waiter.

Waiter. Sir, Squire Level's man is below, with a hare and a brace of pheasants for Mr H.

Mr H. Give the man half-a-crown, and bid him return my best respects to his master. Presents it seems will find me out, with any name, or no name.

Enter 2d Waiter.

2d Waiter. Sir, the man that makes up the Directory is at the door.

Mr H. Give him a shilling, that is what these fellows come for.

2d Waiter. He has sent up to know by what name your Honour will please to be inserted.

Mr H. Zounds, fellow, I give him a shilling for leaving out my name, not for putting it in. This is one of the plaguy comforts of going anonymous.

[*Exit 2d Waiter.*

Enter 3d Waiter.

3d Waiter. Two letters for Mr H. [*Exit.*

Mr H. From ladies (*opens them*). This from Melesinda, to remind me of the morning call I promised; the pretty creature positively languishes to be made Mrs H. I believe I must indulge her (*affectedly*). This from her cousin, to bespeak me to some party, I suppose (*opening it*).—Oh, "this evening"—"Tea and cards"—(*surveying himself with complacency*). Dear H. thou art certainly a pretty fellow. I wonder what makes thee such a favourite among the ladies: I wish it may not be owing to the concealment of thy unfortunate——pshaw!

Enter 4th Waiter.

4th Waiter. Sir, one Mr Printagain is inquiring for you.

Mr H. Oh, I remember, the poet; he is publishing by subscription. Give him a guinea, and tell him he may put me down.

4th Waiter. What name shall I tell him, Sir?

Mr H. Zounds, he is a poet; let him fancy a name. [*Exit 4th Waiter.*

Enter 5th Waiter.

5th Waiter. Sir, Bartlemy the lame beggar, that you sent a private donation to last Monday, has by some accident discovered his benefactor, and is at the door waiting to return thanks.

Mr H. Oh, poor fellow, who could put it into his head? Now I shall be teazed by all his tribe, when once this is known. Well, tell him I am glad I could be of any service to him, and send him away.

5th Waiter. I would have done so, Sir; but the object of his call now, he says, is only to know who he is obliged to.

Mr H. Why, me.

5th Waiter. Yes, Sir.

Mr H. Me, me, me, who else, to be sure?

5th Waiter. Yes, Sir; but he is anxious to know the name of his benefactor.

Mr H. Here is a pampered rogue of a beggar, that cannot be obliged to a gentleman in the way of his profession, but he must know the name, birth, parentage, and education of his benefactor! I warrant you, next he will require a certificate of one's good behaviour, and a magistrate's licence in one's pocket, lawfully empowering so and so to—give an alms. Any thing more?

5th Waiter. Yes, Sir: here has been Mr Patriot,

with the county petition to sign; and Mr Failtime, that owes so much money, has sent to remind you of your promise to bail him.

Mr H. Neither of which I can do, while I have no name. Here is more of the plaguy comforts of going anonymous, that one can neither serve one's friend nor one's country. Damn it, a man had better be without a nose, than without a name. I will not live long in this mutilated, dismembered state; I will to Melesinda this instant, and try to forget these vexations. Melesinda! there is music in the name; but then, hang it! there is none in mine to answer to it. [*Exit.*

(*While* Mr H. *has been speaking, two Gentlemen have been observing him curiously.*)

1*st Gent.* Who the devil is this extraordinary personage?

2*d Gent.* Who? Why, 'tis Mr H.

1*st Gent.* Has he no more name?

Gent. None that has yet transpired. No more! why that single letter has been enough to inflame the imaginations of all the ladies in Bath. He has been here but a fortnight, and is already received into all the first families.

1*st Gent.* Wonderful! yet, nobody knows who he is, or where he comes from!

2*d Gent.* He is vastly rich, gives away money as if he had infinity; dresses well, as you see; and for address, the mothers are all dying for fear the daughters should get him; and for the daughters, he may command them as absolutely as——. Melesinda, the rich heiress, 'tis thought, will carry him.

1*st Gent.* And is it possible that a mere anonymous—

2*d Gent.* Phoo! that is the charm, Who is he? and What is he? and What is his name?——The man

with the great nose on his face never excited more of the gaping passion of wonderment in the dames of Strasburg, than this new-comer with the single letter to his name, has lighted up among the wives and maids of Bath; his simply having lodgings here, draws more visitors to the house than an election. Come with me to the Parade, and I will shew you more of him. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE *in the Street.* (MR H. *walking*, BELVIL *meeting him.*)

Belvil. My old Jamaica school-fellow, that I have not seen for so many years? it must—it can be no other than Jack (*going up to him*). My dear Ho——

Mr H. (*Stopping his mouth*) Ho——! the devil, hush.

Belvil. Why sure it is—

Mr H. It is, it is your old friend Jack, that shall be nameless.

Belvil. My dear Ho——

Mr H. (*Stopping him.*) Don't name it.

Belvil. Name what?

Mr H. My curst unfortunate name. I have reasons to conceal it for a time.

Belvil. I understand you—Creditors, Jack?

Mr H. No, I assure you.

Belvil. Snapp'd up a ward, peradventure, and the whole Chancery at your heels?

Mr H. I don't use to travel with such cumbersome luggage.

Belvil. You ha'n't taken a purse?

Mr H. To relieve you at once from all disgraceful conjectures, you must know, 'tis nothing but the sound of my name.

Belvil. Ridiculous! 'tis true yours is none of the most romantic, but what can that signify in a man?

Mr H. You must understand that I am in some credit with the ladies.

Belvil. With the ladies!

Mr H. And truly I think not without some pretensions. My fortune—

Belvil. Sufficiently splendid, if I may judge from your appearance.

Mr H. My figure—

Belvil. Airy, gay, and imposing.

Mr H. My parts—

Belvil. Bright.

Mr H. My conversation—

Belvil. Equally remote from flippancy and taciturnity.

Mr H. But then my name—damn my name.

Belvil. Childish!

Mr H. Not so. Oh, Belvil, you are blest with one which sighing virgins may repeat without a blush, and for it change the paternal. But what virgin of any delicacy (and I require some in a wife) would endure to be called Mrs. ——?

Belvil. Ha, ha, ha! most absurd. Did not Clementina Falconbridge, the romantic Clementina Falconbridge, fancy Tommy Potts? and Rosabella Sweetlips sacrifice her mellifluous appellative to Jack Deady? Matilda her cousin married a Gubbins, and her sister Amelia a Clutterbuck.

Mr H. Potts is tolerable, Deady is sufferable, Gubbins is bearable, and Clutterbuck is endurable, but Ho——

Belvil. Hush, Jack, don't betray yourself. But you are really ashamed of the family name?

Mr H. Ay, and of my father that begot me, and my father's father, and all their forefathers that have borne it since the Conquest.

Belvil. But how do you know the women are so squeamish?

Mr H. I have tried them. I tell you there is neither maiden of sixteen nor widow of sixty but

would turn up their noses at it. I have been refused by nineteen virgins, twenty-nine relicts, and two old maids.

Belvil. That was hard indeed, Jack.

Mr H. Parsons have stuck at publishing the banns, because they averred it was a heathenish name ; parents have lingered their consent, because they suspected it was a fictitious name ; and rivals have declined my challenges, because they pretended it was an ungentlemanly name.

Belvil. Ha, ha, ha ! but what course do you mean to pursue ?

Mr H. To engage the affections of some generous girl, who will be content to take me as Mr H.

Belvil. Mr H. ?

Mr H. Yes, that is the name I go by here ; you know one likes to be as near the truth as possible.

Belvil. Certainly. But what then ? to get her to consent—

Mr H. To accompany me to the altar without a name——in short to suspend her curiosity (that is all) till the moment the priest shall pronounce the irrrevocable charm, which makes two names one.

Belvil. And that name——and then she must be pleased, ha, Jack ?

Mr H. Exactly such a girl it has been my fortune to meet with, hark'e (*whispers*)—— (*musing*) yet hang it, 'tis cruel to betray her confidence.

Belvil. But the family name, Jack.

Mr H. As you say, the family name must be perpetuated.

Belvil. Though it be but a homely one.

Mr H. True, but come, I will shew you the house where dwells this credulous melting fair.

Belvil. Ha, ha, my old friend dwindled down to one letter. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment in* MELESINDA'S *House.*

(MELESINDA *sola, as if musing.*)

Melesinda. H, H, H. Sure it must be something precious by its being concealed. It can't be Homer, that is a Heathen's name; nor Horatio, that is no surname; what if it be Hamlet? the Lord Hamlet—pretty, and I his poor distracted Ophelia! No, 'tis none of these; 'tis Harcourt or Hargrave, or some such sounding name, or Howard, highborn Howard, that would do; may be it is Harley, methinks my H. resembles Harley, the feeling Harley. But I hear him, and from his own lips I will once for ever be resolved.

Enter MR H.

Mr H. My dear Melesinda.

Melesinda. My dear H. that is all you give me power to swear allegiance to,—to be enamoured of inarticulate sounds, and call with sighs upon an empty letter. But I will know.

Mr H. My dear Melesinda, press me no more for the disclosure of that, which in the face of day so soon must be revealed. Call it whim, humour, caprice, in me. Suppose I have sworn an oath, never, till the ceremony of our marriage is over, to disclose my true name.

Melesinda. Oh! H, H, H. I cherish here a fire of restless curiosity which consumes me. 'Tis appetite, passion, call it whim, caprice, in me. Suppose I have sworn I must and will know it this very night.

Mr H. Ungenerous Melesinda! I implore you to give me this one proof of your confidence. The holy vow once past, your H. shall not have a secret to withhold.

Melesinda. My H. has overcome: his Melesinda shall pine away and die, before she dare express a

saucy inclination; but what shall I call you till we are married?

Mr H. Call me? call me anything, call me Love, Love! ay Love, Love will do very well.

Melesinda. How many syllables is it, Love?

Mr H. How many? ud, that is coming to the question with a vengeance. One, two, three, four, —what does it signify how many syllables?

Melesinda. How many syllables, Love?

Mr H. My Melesinda's mind, I had hoped, was superior to this childish curiosity.

Melesinda. How many letters are there in it?

[*Exit* Mr H. *followed by* Melesinda, *repeating the question.*

Scene.—*A Room in the Inn.* (*Two Waiters disputing.*)

1*st Waiter.* Sir Harbottle Hammond, you may depend upon it.

2*d Waiter.* Sir Harry Hardcastle, I tell you.

1*st Waiter.* The Hammonds of Huntingdonshire.

2*d Waiter.* The Hardcastles of Hertfordshire.

1*st Waiter.* The Hammonds.

2*d Waiter.* Don't tell me: does not Hardcastle begin with an H?

1*st Waiter.* So does Hammond for that matter.

2*d Waiter.* Faith, so it does if you go to spell it. I did not think of that. I begin to be of your opinion; he is certainly a Hammond.

1*st Waiter.* Here comes Susan Chambermaid, may be she can tell.

Enter Susan.

Both. Well, Susan, have you heard any thing who the strange gentleman is?

Susan. Haven't you heard? it's all come out; Mrs Guesswell, the parson's widow, has been here about it. I overheard her talking in confidence to

Mrs Setter and Mrs Pointer, and she says they were holding a sort of a *cummitty* about it.

Both. What? What?

Susan. There can't be a doubt of it, she says, what from his *figger* and the appearance he cuts, and his *sumpshous* way of living, and above all from the remarkable circumstance that his surname should begin with an H, that he must be—

Both. Well, well—

Susan. Neither more nor less than the Prince.

Both. Prince!

Susan. The Prince of Hessy-Cassel in disguise.

Both. Very likely, very likely.

Susan. Oh, there can't be a doubt on it. Mrs Guesswell says she knows it.

1*st Waiter.* Now if we could be sure that the Prince of Hessy what-do-you-call-him was in England on his travels.

2*d Waiter.* Get a newspaper. Look in the newspapers.

Susan. Fiddle of the newspapers, who else can it be?

Both. That is very true (*gravely*).

Enter LANDLORD.

Landlord. Here, Susan, James, Philip, where are you all? The London coach is come in, and there is Mr Fillaside, the fat passenger, has been bawling for somebody to help him off with his boots.

[*The Chambermaid and Waiters slip out.*

(*Solus.*) The house is turned upside down since the strange gentleman came into it. Nothing but guessing and speculating, and speculating and guessing; waiters and chambermaids getting into corners and speculating, ostlers and stable-boys speculating in the yard, I believe the very horses in the stable are speculating too, for there they stand in a musing

posture, nothing for them to eat, and not seeming to care whether they have any thing or no; and after all what does it signify? I hate such curious —— odso, I must take this box up into his bed-room—he charged me to see to it myself—I hate such inquisitive —— I wonder what is in it—it feels heavy. (*reads*) "Leases, title deeds, wills." Here now a man might satisfy his curiosity at once. Deeds must have names to them, so must leases and wills. But I wouldn't—no I wouldn't—it is a pretty box too—prettily dovetailed—I admire the fashion of it much. But I'd cut my fingers off, before I'd do such a dirty—what have I to do—curse the keys, how they rattle—rattle in one's pockets—the keys and the halfpence (*takes out a bunch and plays with them*). I wonder if any of these would fit; one might just try them, but I wouldn't lift up the lid if they did. Oh no, what should I be the richer for knowing? (*All this time he tries the keys one by one.*) What's his name to me? a thousand names begin with an H. I hate people that are always prying, poking and prying into things,—thrusting their finger into one place—a mighty little hole this—and their keys into another. Oh Lord! little rusty fits it! but what is that to me? I wouldn't go to—no, no —but it is odd little rusty should just happen—(*While he is turning up the lid of the box*, Mr H. *enters behind him unperceived.*)

Mr H. What are you about, you dog?

Landlord. Oh Lord, Sir! pardon; no thief, as I hope to be saved. Little Pry was always honest.

Mr H. What else could move you to open that box?

Landlord. Sir, don't kill me, and I will confess the whole truth. This box happened to be lying—that is, I happened to be carrying this box, and I happened to have my keys out, and so—little rusty happened to fit!——

Mr H. So little rusty happened to fit!—and would not a rope fit that rogue's neck? I see the papers have not been moved: all is safe, but it was as well to frighten him a little (*aside*). Come, Landlord, as I think you honest, and suspect you only intended to gratify a little foolish curiosity——

Landlord. That was all, Sir, upon my veracity.

Mr H. For this time I will pass it over. Your name is Pry, I think.

Landlord. Yes, Sir, Jeremiah Pry, at your service.

Mr H. An apt name, you have a prying temper. I mean, some little curiosity, a sort of inquisitiveness about you.

Landlord. A natural thirst after knowledge you may call it, Sir. When a boy I was never easy, but when I was thrusting up the lids of some of my school-fellows' boxes,—not to steal any thing, upon my honour, Sir,—only to see what was in them; have had pens stuck in my eyes for peeping through key-holes after knowledge; could never see a cold pie with the legs dangling out at top, but my fingers were for lifting up the crust,—just to try if it were pigeon or partridge,—for no other reason in the world. Surely I think my passion for nuts was owing to the pleasure of cracking the shell to get at something concealed, more than to any delight I took in eating the kernel. In short, Sir, this appetite has grown with my growth.

Mr H. You will certainly be hanged some day for peeping into some bureau or other, just to see what is in it.

Landlord. That is my fear, Sir. The thumps and kicks I have had for peering into parcels, and turning of letters inside out,—just for curiosity! The blankets I have been made to dance in for searching parish registers for old ladies' ages,—just for curiosity! Once I was dragged through a horse-pond, only for

peeping into a closet that had glass doors to it, while my Lady Bluegarters was undressing,—just for curiosity!

Mr H. A very harmless piece of curiosity, truly; and now, Mr Pry, first have the goodness to leave that box with me, and then do me the favour to carry your curiosity so far, as to inquire if my servants are within.

Landlord. I shall, Sir. Here, David, Jonathan,—I think I hear them coming,—shall make bold to leave you, Sir. [*Exit.*

Mr H. Another tolerable specimen of the comforts of going anonymous!

Enter two Footmen.

1*st Footman.* You speak first.

2*d Footman.* No, you had better speak.

1*st Footman.* You promised to begin.

Mr H. They have something to say to me. The rascals want their wages raised, I suppose; there is always a favour to be asked when they come smiling. Well, poor rogues, service is but a hard bargain at the best. I think I must not be close with them. Well, David—well, Jonathan.

1*st Footman.* We have served your honour faithfully——

2*d Footman.* Hope your honour won't take offence——

Mr H. The old story, I suppose—wages?

1*st Footman.* That's not it, your honour.

2*d Footman.* You speak.

1*st Footman.* But if your honour would just be pleased to——

2*d Footman.* Only be pleased to——

Mr H. Be quick with what you have to say, for I am in haste.

1*st Footman.* Just to——

2d Footman. Let us know who it is——

1st Footman. Who it is we have the honour to serve.

Mr H. Why me, me, me; you serve me.

2d Footman. Yes, Sir; but we do not know who you are.

Mr H. Childish curiosity! do not you serve a rich master, a gay master, an indulgent master?

1st Footman. Ah, Sir! the figure you make is to us, your poor servants, the principal mortification.

2d Footman. When we get over a pot at the public-house, or in a gentleman's kitchen, or elsewhere, as poor servants must have their pleasures—when the question goes round, who is your master? and who do you serve? and one says, I serve Lord So-and-so, and another, I am Squire Such-a-one's footman——

1st Footman. We have nothing to say for it, but that we serve Mr H.

2d Footman. Or Squire H.

Mr H. Really you are a couple of pretty modest, reasonable personages; but I hope you will take it as no offence, gentlemen, if, upon a dispassionate review of all that you have said, I think fit not to tell you any more of my name, than I have chosen for especial purposes to communicate to the rest of the world.

1st Footman. Why, then, Sir, you may suit yourself.

2d Footman. We tell you plainly, we cannot stay.

1st Footman. We don't choose to serve Mr H.

2d Footman. Nor any Mr or Squire in the alphabet——

1st Footman. That lives in Chris-cross Row.

Mr H. Go, for a couple of ungrateful, inquisitive, senseless rascals! Go hang, starve, or drown!—Rogues, to speak thus irreverently of the alphabet—I shall live to see you glad to serve old Q—to curl the

wig of great S—adjust the dot of little i—stand behind the chair of X, Y, Z—wear the livery of Etcætera—and ride behind the sulky of And-by-itself-and ! [*Exit in a rage.*

ACT II.

SCENE.—*A handsome Apartment well lighted, Tea, Cards, &c.—A large party of Ladies and Gentlemen; among them* MELESINDA.

1*st Lady.* I wonder when the charming man will be here.

2*d Lady.* He is a delightful creature. Such a polish——

3*d Lady.* Such an air in all that he does or says——

4*th Lady.* Yet gifted with a strong understanding——

5*th Lady.* But has your ladyship the remotest idea of what his true name is?

1*st Lady.* They say, his very servants do not know it. His French valet, that has lived with him these two years——

2*d Lady.* There, Madam, I must beg leave to set you right: my coachman——

1*st Lady.* I have it from the very best authority: my footman——

2*d Lady.* Then, Madam, you have set your servants on——

1*st Lady.* No, Madam, I would scorn any such little mean ways of coming at a secret. For my part, I don't think any secret of that consequence.

2*d Lady.* That's just like me; I make a rule of troubling my head with nobody's business but my own.

Melesinda. But then, she takes care to make every body's business her own, and so to justify herself that way—— [*Aside.*

1*st Lady*. My dear Melesinda, you look thoughtful.

Melesinda. Nothing.

2*d Lady*. Give it a name.

Melesinda. Perhaps it is nameless.

1*st Lady*. As the object——Come, never blush, nor deny it, child. Bless me, what great ugly thing is that, that dangles at your bosom?

Melesinda. This? it is a cross: how do you like it?

2*d Lady*. A cross? Well, to me it looks for all the world like a great staring H.

[*here a general laugh.*

Melesinda. Malicious creatures! Believe me it is a cross, and nothing but a cross.

1*st Lady*. A cross, I believe, you would willingly hang at.

Melesinda. Intolerable spite!

[MR H. *is announced.*

Enter MR H.

1*st Lady*. O, Mr H., we are so glad——

2*d Lady*. We have been so dull——

3*d Lady*. So perfectly lifeless——You owe it to us, to be more than commonly entertaining.

Mr H. Ladies, this is so obliging——

4*th Lady*. O, Mr H, those ranunculas you said were dying, pretty things, they have got up——

5*th Lady*. I have worked that sprig you commended—I want you to come——

Mr H. Ladies——

6*th Lady*. I have sent for that piece of music from London.

Mr H. The Mozart—(*seeing* MELESINDA)—Melesinda!

Several Ladies at once. Nay positively, Melesinda, you shan't engross him all to yourself.

[*While the Ladies are pressing about* MR H. *the gentlemen shew signs of displeasure.*

1*st Gent.* We shan't be able to edge in a word, now this coxcomb is come.

2*d Gent.* Damn him, I will affront him.

1*st Gent.* Sir, with your leave, I have a word to say to one of these ladies.

2*d Gent.* If we could be heard——

[*The Ladies pay no attention but to* MR H.

Mr H. You see, gentlemen, how the matter stands. (*hums an air.*) I am not my own master: positively I exist and breathe but to be agreeable to these——Did you speak?

1*st Gent.* And affects absence of mind, Puppy!

Mr H. Who spoke of absence of mind, did you, Madam? How do you do, Lady Wearwell—how do? I did not see your ladyship before—what was I about to say—O—absence of mind. I am the most unhappy dog in that way, sometimes spurt out the strangest things—the most mal-a-propos—without meaning to give the least offence, upon my honour—sheer absence of mind—things I would have given the world not to have said.

1*st Gent.* Do you hear the coxcomb?

1*st Lady.* Great wits, they say——

2*d Lady.* Your fine geniuses are most given——

3*d Lady.* Men of bright parts are commonly too vivacious——

Mr H. But you shall hear. I was to dine the other day at a great nabob's, that must be nameless, who, between ourselves, is strongly suspected of—being very rich, that's all. John, my valet, who knows my foible, cautioned me, while he was dressing me, as he usually does where he thinks there's a danger of my committing a *lapsus*, to take care in my conversation how I made any allusion direct or indirect to presents—you understand me? I set out

double charged with my fellow's consideration and my own, and, to do myself justice, behaved with tolerable circumspection for the first half-hour or so —till at last a gentleman in company, who was indulging a free vein of raillery at the expense of the ladies, stumbled upon that expression of the poet, which calls them "fair defects."

1st Lady. It is Pope, I believe, who says it.

Mr H. No, Madam; Milton. Where was I? O, "fair defects." This gave occasion to a critic in company, to deliver his opinion on the phrase— that led to an enumeration of all the various words which might have been used instead of "defect," as want, absence, poverty, deficiency, lack. This moment I, who had not been attending to the progress of the argument (as the denouement will shew), starting suddenly up out of one of my reveries, by some unfortunate connexion of ideas, which the last fatal word had excited, the devil put it into my head to turn round to the Nabob, who was sitting next me, and in a very marked manner (as it seemed to the company) to put the question to him, Pray, Sir, what may be the exact value of a lack of rupees? You may guess the confusion which followed.

1st Lady. What a distressing circumstance!

2d Lady. To a delicate mind——

3d Lady. How embarrassing——

4th Lady. I declare, I quite pity you.

1st Gent. Puppy!

Mr H. A Baronet at the table, seeing my dilemma, jogged my elbow; and a good-natured Duchess, who does every thing with a grace peculiar to herself, trod on my toes at that instant: this brought me to myself, and—covered with blushes, and pitied by all the ladies—I withdrew.

1st Lady. How charmingly he tells a story.

2d Lady. But how distressing!

Mr H. Lord Squandercounsel, who is my particular friend, was pleased to railly me in his inimitable way upon it next day. I shall never forget a sensible thing he said on the occasion—speaking of absence of mind, my foible—says he, my dear Hogs——

Several Ladies. Hogs——what—ha—

Mr H. My dear Hogsflesh—my name—(*here an universal scream*)—O my cursed unfortunate tongue! —H. I mean—where was I?

1*st Lady.* Filthy—abominable!

2*d Lady.* Unutterable!

3*d Lady.* Hogs——foh!

4*th Lady.* Disgusting!

5*th Lady.* Vile!

6*th Lady.* Shocking.

1*st Lady.* Odious!

2*d Lady.* Hogs——pah!

3*d Lady.* A smelling bottle—look to Miss Melesinda. Poor thing! it is no wonder. You had better keep off from her, Mr Hogsflesh, and not be pressing about her in her circumstances.

1*st Gent.* Good time of day to you, Mr Hogsflesh.

2*d Gent.* The compliments of the season to you, Mr. Hogsflesh.

Mr H. This is too much—flesh and blood cannot endure it.

1*st Gent.* What flesh?—hog's-flesh?

2*d Gent.* How he sets up his bristles!

Mr H. Bristles!

1*st Gent.* He looks as fierce as a hog in armour.

Mr H. A hog!——Madam!——(*here he severally accosts the Ladies, who by turns repel him.*)

1*st Lady.* Extremely obliged to you for your attentions; but don't want a partner.

2*d Lady.* Greatly flattered by your preference; but believe I shall remain single.

Mr H- O my cursed unfortunate tongue!

3d Lady. Shall always acknowledge your politeness; but have no thoughts of altering my condition.

4th Lady. Always be happy to respect you as a friend; but you must not look for anything further.

5th Lady. No doubt of your ability to make any woman happy; but have no thoughts of changing my name.

6th Lady. Must tell you, Sir, that if by your insinuations, you think to prevail with me, you have got the wrong sow by the ear. Does he think any lady would go to pig with him?

Old Lady. Must beg you to be less particular in your addresses to me. Does he take me for a Jew, to long after forbidden meats?

Mr H. I shall go mad!—to be refused by old Mother Damnable—she that's so old, nobody knows whether she was ever married or no, but passes for a maid by courtesy; her juvenile exploits being beyond the farthest stretch of tradition!—old Mother Damnable!

[*Exeunt all, either pitying or seeming to avoid him.*

SCENE.—*The Street.*

BELVIL *and another Gentleman.*

Belvil. Poor Jack, I am really sorry for him. The account which you give me of his mortifying change of reception at the assembly, would be highly diverting, if it gave me less pain to hear it. With all his amusing absurdities, and amongst them not the least, a predominant desire to be thought well of by the fair sex, he has an abundant share of good nature, and is a man of honour. Notwithstanding all that has happened, Melesinda may do worse than take him yet. But did the women resent it so deeply as you say?

Gent. O intolerably—they fled him as fearfully

when 'twas once blown, as a man would be avoided, who was suddenly discovered to have marks of the plague, and as fast; when before they had been ready to devour the foolishest thing he could say.

Belvil. Ha! ha! so frail is the tenure by which these women's favourites commonly hold their envied pre-eminence. Well, I must go find him out and comfort him. I suppose, I shall find him at the inn.

Gent. Either there or at Melesinda's—Adieu!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—MR H——'s *Apartment.*

Mr H. (*solus*) Was ever any thing so mortifying? to be refused by old Mother Damnable!—with such parts and address,—and the little squeamish devils, to dislike me for a name, a sound.—O my cursed name! that it was something I could be revenged on! if it were alive, that I might tread upon it, or crush it, or pummel it, or kick it, or spit it out—for it sticks in my throat, and will choak me.

My plaguy ancestors! if they had left me but a Van, or a Mac, or an Irish O', it had been something to qualify it.—Mynheer Van Hogsflesh,—or Sawney Mac Hogsflesh,—or Sir Phelim O'Hogsflesh,—but downright blunt ———. If it had been any other name in the world, I could have borne it. If it had been the name of a beast, as Bull, Fox, Kid, Lamb, Wolf, Lion; or of a bird, as Sparrow, Hawk, Buzzard, Daw, Finch, Nightingale; or of a fish, as Sprat, Herring, Salmon; or the name of a thing, as Ginger, Hay, Wood; or of a colour, as Black, Grey, White, Green; or of a sound, as Bray; or the name of a month, as March, May; or of a place, as Barnet, Baldock, Hitchin; or the name of a coin, as Farthing, Penny, Twopenny; or of a profession, as Butcher, Baker, Carpenter, Piper, Fisher, Fletcher, Fowler, Glover; or a Jew's name, as Solomons, Isaacs,

Jacobs; or a personal name, as Foot, Leg, Crookshanks, Heaviside, Sidebottom, Longbottom, Ramsbottom, Winterbottom; or a long name, as Blanchenhagen, or Blanchenhausen; or a short name, as Crib, Crisp, Crips, Tag, Trot, Tub, Phips, Padge, Papps, or Prig, or Wig, or Pip, or Trip; Trip had been something, but Ho——. (*Walks about in great agitation—recovering his calmness a little, sits down.*)

Farewell the most distant thoughts of marriage; the finger-circling ring, the purity-figuring glove, the envy-pining bridemaids, the wishing parson, and the simpering clerk. Farewell the ambiguous blush-raising joke, the titter-provoking pun, the morning-stirring drum.—No son of mine shall exist, to bear my ill-fated name. No nurse come chuckling, to tell me it is a boy. No midwife, leering at me from under the lids of professional gravity. I dreamed of caudle. (*sings in a melancholy tone.*) Lullaby, Lullaby, —hush-a-by-baby—how like its papa it is!—(*makes motions as if he was nursing.*) And then, when grown up, "Is this your son, Sir?" "Yes, Sir, a poor copy of me,—a sad young dog,—just what his father was at his age,—I have four more at home." Oh! oh! oh!

Enter LANDLORD.

Mr H. Landlord, I must pack up tonight; you will see all my things got ready.

Landlord. Hope your Honor does not intend to quit the Blue Boar,—sorry any thing has happened.

Mr H. He has heard it all.

Landlord. Your Honour has had some mortification, to be sure, as a man may say; you have brought your pigs to a fine market.

Mr H. Pigs!

Landlord. What then? take old Pry's advice, and never mind it. Don't scorch your crackling for 'em, Sir.

Mr H. Scorch my crackling! a queer phrase; but I suppose he don't mean to affront me.

Landlord. What is done can't be undone; you can't make a silken purse out of a sow's ear.

Mr H. As you say, Landlord, thinking of a thing does but augment it.

Landlord. Does but *hogment* it, indeed, Sir.

Mr H. Hogment it! damn it, I said augment it.

Landlord. Lord, Sir, 'tis not every body has such gift of fine phrases as your Honour, that can lard his discourse—

Mr H. Lard!

Landlord. Suppose they do smoke you—

Mr H. Smoke me!

Landlord. One of my phrases; never mind my words, Sir, my meaning is good. We all mean the same thing, only you express yourself one way, and I another, that's all. The meaning's the same; it is all pork.

Mr H. That's another of your phrases, I presume.

[*Bell rings, and the Landlord called for.*

Landlord. Anon, anon.

Mr H. Oh, I wish I were anonymous.

[*Exeunt several ways.*

SCENE.—MELESINDA'S *Apartment.*

MELESINDA *and Maid.*

Maid. Lord, Madam! before I'd take on as you do about a foolish—what signifies a name? Hogs—Hogs—what is it—is just as good as any other, for what I see.

Melesinda. Ignorant creature! yet she is perhaps blest in the absence of those ideas, which, while they

add a zest to the few pleasures which fall to the lot of superior natures to enjoy, doubly edge the ——

Maid. Superior natures! a fig! If he's hog by name, he's not hog by nature, that don't follow—his name don't make him any thing, does it? He don't grunt the more for it, nor squeak, that ever I hear; he likes his victuals out of a plate, as other Christians do, you never see him go to the trough ——

Melesinda. Unfeeling wretch! yet possibly her intentions ——

Maid. For instance, Madam, my name is Finch—Betty Finch. I don't whistle the more for that, nor long after canary-seed while I can get good wholesome mutton—no, nor you can't catch me by throwing salt on my tail. If you come to that, hadn't I a young man used to come after me, they said courted me—his name was Lion—Francis Lion, a tailor; but though he was fond enough of me, for all that he never offered to eat me.

Melesinda. How fortunate that the discovery has been made before it was too late! Had I listened to his deceits, and, as the perfidious man had almost persuaded me, precipitated myself into an inextricable engagement, before ——

Maid. No great harm if you had. You'd only have bought a pig in a poke—and what then? Oh, here he comes creeping ——

Enter MR H. *abject.*

Go to her, Mr Hogs—Hogs—Hogsbristles, what's your name? Don't be afraid, man — don't give it up—she's not crying—only *summat* has made her eyes red—she has got a sty in her eye, I believe —(*going*).

Melesinda. You are not going, Betty?

Maid. O, Madam, never mind me—I shall be

back in the twinkling of a pig's whisker, as they say. [*Exit.*

Mr H. Melesinda, you behold before you a wretch who would have betrayed your confidence—but it was love that prompted him ; who would have tricked you by an unworthy concealment into a participation of that disgrace which a superficial world has agreed to attach to a name—but with it you would have shared a fortune not contemptible, and a heart—but 'tis over now. That name he is content to bear alone—to go where the persecuted syllables shall be no more heard, or excite no meaning—some spot where his native tongue has never penetrated, nor any of his countrymen have landed, to plant their unfeeling satire, their brutal wit, and national ill manners—where no Englishman—(*Here* MELESINDA, *who has been pouting during this speech, fetches a deep sigh.*) Some yet undiscovered Otaheite, where witless, unapprehensive savages shall innocently pronounce the ill-fated sounds, and think them not inharmonious.

Melesinda. Oh !

Mr H. Who knows but among the female natives might be found ——

Melesinda. Sir ! (*raising her head.*)

Mr H. One who would be more kind than—some Oberea—Queen Oberea.

Melesinda. Oh !

Mr H. Or what if I were to seek for proofs of reciprocal esteem among unprejudiced African maids, in Monomotopa ?

Enter Servant.

Servant. Mr Belvil. [*Exit.*

Enter BELVIL.

Mr H. Monomotopa (*musing*).

Belvil. Heyday, Jack ! what means this mortified

face? nothing has happened, I hope, between this lady and you? I beg pardon, Madam, but understanding my friend was with you, I took the liberty of seeking him here. Some little difference possibly which a third person can adjust—not a word—will you, Madam, as this gentleman's friend, suffer me to be the arbitrator—strange—hark'e, Jack, nothing has come out, has there? you understand me. Oh I guess how it is—somebody has got at your secret, you hav'n't blabbed it yourself, have you? ha! ha! ha! I could find in my heart—Jack, what would you give me if I should relieve you ——

Mr H. No power of man can relieve me (*sighs*), but it must lie at the root, gnawing at the root—here it will lie.

Belvil. No power of man? not a common man, I grant you; for instance, a subject—it's out of the power of any subject.

Mr H. Gnawing at the root—there it will lie.

Belvil. Such a thing has been known as a name to be changed; but not by a subject (*shews a Gazette*).

Mr H. Gnawing at the root—(*suddenly snatches the paper out of* BELVIL's *hand*)—ha! pish! nonsense! give it me—what! (*reads*) promotions, bankrupts—a great many bankrupts this week—there it will lie. (*lays it down, takes it up again, and reads*) "The King has been graciously pleased"—gnawing at the root—"graciously pleased to grant unto John Hogsflesh,"—the devil—"Hogsflesh, Esq., of Sty Hall, in the county of Hants, his royal licence and authority"—O Lord! O Lord!—"that he and his issue"—me and my issue—"may take and use the surname and arms of Bacon"—Bacon, the surname and arms of Bacon—"in pursuance of an injunction contained in the last will and testament of Nicholas Bacon, Esq., his late uncle, as well as out of grateful respect to his memory:" grateful respect! poor old soul——here's

more—"and that such arms may be first duly exemplified"—they shall, I will take care of that—"according to the laws of arms, and recorded in the Herald's Office."

Belvil. Come, Madam, give me leave to put my own interpretation upon your silence, and to plead for my friend, that now that only obstacle which seemed to stand in the way of your union is removed, you will suffer me to complete the happiness which my news seems to have brought him, by introducing him with a new claim to your favour, by the name of Mr Bacon. (*Takes their hands and joins them, which* MELESINDA *seems to give consent to with a smile.*)

Mr H. Generous Melesinda! my dear friend—"he and his issue," me and my issue!—O Lord!—

Belvil. I wish you joy, Jack, with all my heart.

Mr H. Bacon, Bacon, Bacon—how odd it sounds! I could never be tired of hearing it. There was Lord Chancellor Bacon. Methinks I have some of the Verulam blood in me already—methinks I could look through Nature—there was Friar Bacon, a conjuror—I feel as if I could conjure too ——

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Two young ladies and an old lady are at the door, inquiring if you see company, Madam.

Mr H. "Surname and arms."—

Melesinda. Shew them up.—My dear Mr Bacon, moderate your joy.

Enter three Ladies, being part of those who were at the Assembly.

1*st Lady.* My dear Melesinda, how do you do?

2*d Lady.* How do you do? We have been so concerned for you ——

Old Lady. We have been so concerned—(*seeing him*)—Mr Hogsflesh ——

Mr H. There's no such person—nor there never was—nor 'tis not fit there should be—"surname and arms" ——

Belvil. It is true what my friend would express; we have been all in a mistake, ladies. Very true, the name of this gentleman was what you call it, but it is so no longer. The succession to the long-contested Bacon estate is at length decided, and with it my friend succeeds to the name of his deceased relative.

Mr H. "His Majesty has been graciously pleased"—

1*st Lady.* I am sure we all join in hearty congratulation—(*sighs*)

2*d Lady.* And wish you joy with all our hearts—(*heigh ho!*)

Old Lady. And hope you will enjoy the name and estate many years—(*cries*).

Belvil. Ha! ha! ha! mortify them a little, Jack.

1*st Lady.* Hope you intend to stay ——

2*d Lady.* With us some time ——

Old Lady. In these parts ——

Mr H. Ladies, for your congratulations I thank you; for the favours you have lavished on me, and in particular for this lady's (*turning to the old Lady*) good opinion, I rest your debtor. As to any future favours—(*accosts them severally in the order in which he was refused by them at the assembly*)—Madam, shall always acknowledge your politeness; but at present, you see, I am engaged with a partner. Always be happy to respect you as a friend, but you must not look for any thing further. Must beg of you to be less particular in your addresses to me. Ladies all, with this piece of advice, of Bath and you

Your ever grateful servant takes his leave.
Lay your plans surer when you plot to grieve ;
See, while you kindly mean to mortify
Another, the wild arrow do not fly,
And gall yourself. For once you've been mistaken ;
Your shafts have miss'd their aim—Hogsflesh has
saved his Bacon.

THE WIFE'S TRIAL

OR

THE INTRUDING WIDOW

A DRAMATIC POEM.

FOUNDED ON MR CRABBE'S TALE OF "THE CONFIDANT."

CHARACTERS.

MR SELBY, *A Wiltshire Gentleman.*
KATHERINE, *Wife to Selby.*
LUCY, *Sister to Selby.*
MRS FRAMPTON, *A Widow.*
SERVANTS.

SCENE—*at* MR SELBY'S *House, or in the grounds adjacent.*

SCENE—*A Library.*

MR SELBY. KATHERINE.

Selby. Do not too far mistake me, gentlest wife;
I meant to chide your virtues, not yourself,
And those too with allowance. I have not
Been blest by thy fair side with five white years
Of smooth and even wedlock, now to touch
With any strain of harshness on a string
Hath yielded me such music. 'Twas the quality
Of a too grateful nature in my Katherine,
That to the lame performance of some vows,
And common courtesies of man to wife,
Attributing too much, hath sometimes seem'd
To esteem as favours, what in that blest union
Are but reciprocal and trivial dues,
As fairly yours as mine: 'twas this I thought
Gently to reprehend.

Kath. In friendship's barter
The riches we exchange should hold some level,
And corresponding worth. Jewels for toys
Demand some thanks thrown in. You took me, sir,
To that blest haven of my peace, your bosom,
An orphan founder'd in the world's black storm.
Poor, you have made me rich ; from lonely maiden,
Your cherish'd and your full-accompanied wife.
Selby. But to divert the subject : Kate too fond,
I would not wrest your meanings ; else that word
Accompanied, and full-accompanied too,
Might raise a doubt in some men, that their wives
Haply did think their company too long ;
And over-company, we know by proof,
Is worse than no attendance.
Kath. I must guess,
You speak this of the Widow—
Selby. 'Twas a bolt
At random shot ; but if it hit, believe me,
I am most sorry to have wounded you
Through a friend's side. I know not how we have swerved
From our first talk. I was to caution you
Against this fault of a too grateful nature :
Which, for some girlish obligations past,
In that relenting season of the heart,
When slightest favours pass for benefits
Of endless binding, would entail upon you
An iron slavery of obsequious duty
To the proud will of an imperious woman.
Kath. The favours are not slight to her I owe.
Selby. Slight or not slight, the tribute she exacts
Cancels all dues— [*A voice within.*
even now I hear her call you
In such a tone, as lordliest mistresses
Expect a slave's attendance. Prithee, Kate,
Let her expect a brace of minutes or so.

Say you are busy. Use her by degrees
To some less hard exactions.
Kath. I conjure you,
Detain me not. I will return—
Selby. Sweet wife,
Use thy own pleasure— [*Exit* KATHERINE.
but it troubles me.
A visit of three days, as was pretended,
Spun to ten tedious weeks, and no hint given
When she will go! I would this buxom Widow
Were a thought handsomer! I'd fairly try
My Katherine's constancy; make desperate love
In seeming earnest; and raise up such broils,
That she, not I, should be the first to warn
The insidious guest depart.
Re-enter KATHERINE.
So soon return'd!
What was our Widow's will?
Kath. A trifle, sir.
Selby. Some toilet service—to adjust her head,
Or help to stick a pin in the right place—
Kath. Indeed 'twas none of these.
Selby. Or new vamp up
The tarnish'd cloak she came in. I have seen her
Demand such service from thee, as her maid,
Twice told to do it, would blush angry-red,
And pack her few clothes up. Poor fool! fond slave!
And yet my dearest Kate!—This day at least
(It is our wedding-day) we spend in freedom,
And will forget our Widow.—Philip, our coach—
Why weeps my wife? You know, I promised you
An airing o'er the pleasant Hampshire downs
To the blest cottage on the green hill side,
Where first I told my love. I wonder much,
If the crimson parlour hath exchanged its hue
For colours not so welcome. Faded though it be,

It will not show less lovely than the tinge
Of this faint red, contending with the pale,
Where once the full-flush'd health gave to this cheek
An apt resemblance to the fruit's warm side,
That bears my Katherine's name.—
Our carriage, Philip.

Enter a Servant.

Now, Robin, what make you here?
Servant. May it please you,
The coachman has driven out with Mrs Frampton.
Selby. He had no orders—
Servant. None, sir, that I know of,
But from the lady, who expects some letter
At the next Post Town.
Selby. Go, Robin. [*Exit Servant.*
How is this?
Kath. I came to tell you so, but fear'd your anger—
Selby. It was ill done though of this Mistress Frampton,
This forward Widow. But a ride's poor loss
Imports not much. In to your chamber, love,
Where you with music may beguile the hour,
While I am tossing over dusty tomes,
Till our most reasonable friend returns.
Kath. I am all obedience. [*Exit* KATHERINE.
Selby. Too obedient, Kate,
And to too many masters. I can hardly
On such a day as this refrain to speak
My sense of this injurious friend, this pest,
This household evil, this close-clinging fiend,
In rough terms to my wife. 'Death, my own servants
Controll'd above me! orders countermanded!
What next? [*Servant enters and announces the Sister.*

Enter LUCY.

Sister ! I know you are come to welcome
This day's return. 'Twas well done.
Lucy. You seem ruffled.
In years gone by this day was used to be
The smoothest of the year. Your honey turn'd
So soon to gall ?
Selby. Gall'd am I, and with cause,
And rid to death, yet cannot get a riddance,
Nay, scarce a ride, by this proud Widow's leave.
Lucy. Something you wrote me of a Mistress Frampton.
Selby. She came at first a meek admitted guest,
Pretending a short stay ; her whole deportment
Seem'd as of one obliged. A slender trunk,
The wardrobe of her scant and ancient clothing,
Bespoke no more. But in few days her dress,
Her looks, were proudly changed. And now she flaunts it
In jewels stolen or borrow'd from my wife ;
Who owes her some strange service, of what nature
I must be kept in ignorance. Katherine's meek
And gentle spirit cowers beneath her eye,
As spell-bound by some witch.
Lucy. Some mystery hangs on it.
How bears she in her carriage towards yourself ?
Selby. As one who fears, and yet not greatly cares
For my displeasure. Sometimes I have thought,
A secret glance would tell me she could love,
If I but gave encouragement. Before me
She keeps some moderation ; but is never
Closeted with my wife, but in the end
I find my Katherine in briny tears.
From the small chamber, where she first was lodged,

The gradual fiend by specious wriggling arts
Has now ensconced herself in the best part
Of this large mansion; calls the left wing her own;
Commands my servants, equipage.—I hear
Her hated tread. What makes she back so soon?

Enter MRS FRAMPTON.

Mrs F. O, I am jolter'd, bruised, and shook to death,
With your vile Wiltshire roads. The villain Philip
Chose, on my conscience, the perversest tracks,
And stoniest hard lanes in all the county,
Till I was fain get out, and so walk back,
My errand unperform'd at Andover.
Lucy. And I shall love the knave for ever after.
[*Aside.*
Mrs F. A friend with you!
Selby. My eldest sister, Lucy,
Come to congratulate this returning morn.—
Sister, my wife's friend, Mistress Frampton.
Mrs F. Pray,
Be seated, for your brother's sake, you are welcome.
I had thought this day to have spent in homely fashion
With the good couple, to whose hospitality
I stand so far indebted. But your coming
Makes it a feast.
Lucy. She does the honours naturally—
[*Aside.*
Selby. As if she were the mistress of the house—
[*Aside.*
Mrs F. I love to be at home with loving friends.
To stand on ceremony with obligations,
Is to restrain the obliger. That old coach, though,
Of yours jumbles one strangely.
Selby. I shall order

An equipage soon, more easy to you, madam—
Lucy. To drive her and her pride to Lucifer,
I hope he means. [*Aside.*
Mrs F. I must go trim myself; this humbled garb
Would shame a wedding-feast. I have your leave
For a short absence?—and your Katherine—
Selby. You'll find her in her closet—
Mrs F. Fare you well, then.
[*Exit.*
Selby. How like you her assurance?
Lucy. Even so well,
That if this Widow were my guest, not yours,
She should have coach enough, and scope to ride.
My merry groom should in a trice convey her
To Sarum Plain, and set her down at Stonehenge,
To pick her path through those antiques at leisure;
She should take sample of our Wiltshire flints.
O, be not lightly jealous! nor surmise,
That to a wanton bold-faced thing like this
Your modest shrinking Katherine could impart
Secrets of any worth, especially
Secrets that touch'd your peace. If there be aught,
My life upon 't, 'tis but some girlish story
Of a First Love; which even the boldest wife
Might modestly deny to a husband's ear,
Much more your timid and too sensitive Katherine.
Selby. I think it is no more; and will dismiss
My further fears, if ever I have had such.
Lucy. Shall we go walk? I'd see your gardens, brother;
And how the new trees thrive, I recommended.
Your Katherine is engaged now—
Selby. I'll attend you.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE—*Servants' Hall.*

HOUSEKEEPER, PHILIP, *and others, laughing.*

Housekeeper. Our Lady's guest, since her short ride, seems ruffled,
And somewhat in disorder. Philip, Philip,
I do suspect some roguery. Your mad tricks
Will some day cost you a good place, I warrant.
Philip. Good Mistress Jane, our serious housekeeper,
And sage Duenna to the maids and scullions,
We must have leave to laugh; our brains are younger,
And undisturb'd with care of keys and pantries.
We are wild things.
Butler. Good Philip, tell us all.
All. Ay, as you live, tell, tell—
Philip. Mad fellows, you shall have it.
The Widow's bell rang lustily and loud—
Butler. I think that no one can mistake her ringing.
Waiting-maid. Our Lady's ring is soft sweet music to it,
More of entreaty hath it than command.
Philip. I lose my story, if you interrupt me thus.
The bell, I say, rang fiercely; and a voice
More shrill than bell, call'd out for "Coachman Philip!"
I straight obey'd, as 'tis my name and office.
"Drive me," quoth she, "to the next market town,
Where I have hope of letters." I made haste;
Put to the horses, saw her safely coach'd,
And drove her—
Waiting-maid. By the straight high road to Andover,
I guess—

Philip. Pray, warrant things within your knowledge,
Good Mistress Abigail; look to your dressings,
And leave the skill in horses to the coachman.
Butler. He'll have his humour; best not interrupt him.
Philip. 'Tis market-day, thought I; and the poor beasts,
Meeting such droves of cattle and of people,
May take a fright; so down the lane I trundled,
Where Goodman Dobson's crazy mare was founder'd,
And where the flints were biggest, and ruts widest,
By ups and downs, and such bone-cracking motions
We flounder'd on a furlong, till my madam,
In policy, to save the few joints left her,
Betook her to her feet, and there we parted.
All. Ha! ha! ha!
Butler. Hang her, 'tis pity such as she should ride.
Waiting-maid. I think she is a witch; I have tired myself out
With sticking pins in her pillow; still she 'scapes them—
Butler. And I with helping her to mum for claret,
But never yet could cheat her dainty palate.
Housekeeper. Well, well, she is the guest of our good Mistress,
And so should be respected. Though, I think,
Our Master cares not for her company,
He would ill brook we should express so much
By rude discourtesies, and short attendance,
Being but servants. (*A Bell rings furiously.*)
'Tis her bell speaks now;
Good, good, bestir yourselves: who knows who's wanted?
Butler. But 'twas a merry trick of Philip coachman.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—MRS SELBY'S *Chamber.*

MRS FRAMPTON, KATHERINE, *working.*

Mrs F. I am thinking, child, how contrary our fates
Have traced our lots through life.—Another needle,
This works untowardly.—An heiress born
To splendid prospects, at our common school
I was as one above you all, not of you;
Had my distinct prerogatives; my freedoms,
Denied to you. Pray, listen—
Kath. I must hear,
What you are pleased to speak—how my heart sinks here! [*Aside.*
Mrs F. My chamber to myself, my separate maid,
My coach, and so forth.—Not that needle, simple one,
With the great staring eye fit for a Cyclops!
Mine own are not so blinded with their griefs,
But I could make a shift to thread a smaller.
A cable or a camel might go through this,
And never strain for the passage.
Kath. I will fit you.—
Intolerable tyranny! [*Aside.*
Mrs F. Quick, quick;
You were not once so slack.—As I was saying,
Not a young thing among ye, but observed me
Above the mistress. Who but I was sought to
In all your dangers, all your little difficulties,
Your girlish scrapes? I was the scape-goat still,
To fetch you off; kept all your secrets, some,
Perhaps, since then—
Kath. No more of that, for mercy,
If you'd not have me, sinking at your feet,
Cleave the cold earth for comfort. [*Kneels.*
Mrs F. This to me?
This posture to your friend had better suited
The orphan Katherine in her humble school-days

To the *then* rich heiress, than the wife of Selby,
Of wealthy Mr Selby,
To the poor widow Frampton, sunk as she is.
Come, come,
'Twas something, or 'twas nothing, that I said;
I did not mean to fright you, sweetest bed-fellow!
You once were so, but Selby now engrosses you.
I'll make him give you up a night or so;
In faith I will: that we may lie, and talk
Old tricks of school-days over.
Kath. Hear me, madam—
Mrs F. Not by that name. Your friend—
Kath. My truest friend,
And saviour of my honour!
Mrs F. This sounds better;
You still shall find me such.
Kath. That you have graced
Our poor house with your presence hitherto,
Has been my greatest comfort, the sole solace
Of my forlorn and hardly guess'd estate.
You have been pleased
To accept some trivial hospitalities,
In part of payment of a long arrear
I owe to you, no less than for my life.
Mrs F. You speak my services too large.
Kath. Nay, less;
For what an abject thing were life to me
Without your silence on my dreadful secret!
And I would wish the league we have renew'd
Might be perpetual—
Mrs F. Have a care, fine madam!
[*Aside.*
Kath. That one house still might hold us. But my husband
Has shown himself of late—
Mrs F. How, Mistress Selby?
Kath. Not, not impatient. You misconstrue him.

He honours, and he loves, nay, he must love
The friend of his wife's youth. But there are moods,
In which—

Mrs F. I understand you ;—in which husbands,
And wives that love, may wish to be alone,
To nurse the tender fits of new-born dalliance,
After a five years' wedlock.

Kath. Was that well,
Or charitably put ? do these pale cheeks
Proclaim a wanton blood ? This wasting form
Seem a fit theatre for Levity
To play his love-tricks on ; and act such follies,
As even in Affection's first bland Moon
Have less of grace than pardon in best wedlocks ?
I was about to say, that there are times,
When the most frank and sociable man
May surfeit on most loved society,
Preferring loneness rather—

Mrs F. To my company—

Kath. Ay, yours, or mine, or any one's. Nay, take
Not this unto yourself. Even in the newness
Of our first married loves 'twas sometimes so.
For solitude, I have heard my Selby say,
Is to the mind as rest to the corporal functions ;
And he would call it oft, the *day's soft sleep.*

Mrs F. What is your drift ? and whereto tends this speech,
Rhetorically labour'd ?

Kath. That you would
Abstain but from our house a month, a week ; make request but for a single day.

Mrs F. A month, a week, a day ! A single hour
Is every week, and month, and the long year,
And all the years to come ! My footing here,
Slipt once, recovers never. From the state
Of gilded roofs, attendance, luxuries,

Parks, gardens, sauntering walks, or wholesome rides,
To the bare cottage on the withering moor,
Where I myself am servant to myself,
Or only waited on by blackest thoughts—
I sink, if this be so. No; here I sit.
Kath. Then I am lost for ever!
[*Sinks at her feet—curtain drops.*

SCENE.—*An Apartment contiguous to the last.*

SELBY, *as if listening.*

Selby. The sounds have died away. What am I changed to?
What do I here, list'ning like to an abject,
Or heartless wittol, that must hear no good,
If he hear aught? "This shall to the ear of your husband."
It was the Widow's word. I guess'd some mystery,
And the solution with a vengeance comes.
What can my wife have left untold to me,
That must be told by proxy? I begin
To call in doubt the course of her life past
Under my very eyes. She hath not been good,
Not virtuous, not discreet; she hath not outrun
My wishes still with prompt and meek observance.
Perhaps she is not fair, sweet-voiced; her eyes
Not like the dove's; all this as well may be,
As that she should entreasure up a secret
In the peculiar closet of her breast,
And grudge it to my ear. It is my right
To claim the halves in any truth she owns,
As much as in the babe I have by her;
Upon whose face henceforth I fear to look,
Lest I should fancy in its innocent brow
Some strange shame written.

Enter Lucy.

Sister, an anxious word with you.
From out the chamber, where my wife but now
Held talk with her encroaching friend, I heard
(Not of set purpose heark'ning, but by chance)
A voice of chiding, answer'd by a tone
Of replication, such as the meek dove
Makes, when the kite has clutch'd her. The high Widow
Was loud and stormy. I distinctly heard
One threat pronounced—" Your husband shall know all."
I am no listener, sister ; and I hold
A secret, got by such unmanly shift,
The pitiful'st of thefts ; but what mine ear,
I not intending it, receives perforce,
I count my lawful prize. Some subtle meaning
Lurks in this fiend's behaviour ; which, by force,
Or fraud I must make mine.

Lucy. The gentlest means
Are still the wisest. What, if you should press
Your wife to a disclosure ?

Selby. I have tried
All gentler means ; thrown out low hints, which, though
Merely suggestions still, have never fail'd
To blanch her cheek with fears. Roughlier to insist,
Would be to kill, where I but meant to heal.

Lucy. Your own description gave that Widow out
As one not much precise, nor over coy,
And nice to listen to a suit of love.
What if you feign'd a courtship, putting on,
(To work the secret from her easy faith,)
For honest ends, a most dishonest seeming ?

Selby. I see your drift, and partly meet your counsel.

But must it not in me appear prodigious,
To say the least, unnatural, and suspicious,
To move hot love, where I have shown cool scorn,
And undissembled looks of blank aversion ?
Lucy. Vain woman is the dupe of her own charms,
And easily credits the resistless power,
That in besieging beauty lies, to cast down
The slight-built fortress of a casual hate.
Selby. I am resolved—
Lucy. Success attend your wooing !
Selby. And I'll about it roundly, my wise sister.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Library.*

MR SELBY. MRS FRAMPTON.

Selby. A fortunate encounter, Mistress Frampton.
My purpose was, if you could spare so much
From your sweet leisure, a few words in private.
Mrs F. What mean his alter'd tones ? These looks to me,
Whose glances yet he has repell'd with coolness ?
Is the wind changed ? I'll veer about with it,
And meet him in all fashions. [*Aside.*
All my leisure,
Feebly bestow'd upon my kind friends here,
Would not express a tithe of the obligements
I every hour incur.
Selby. No more of that.
I know not why, my wife hath lost of late
Much of her cheerful spirits.
Mrs F. It was my topic
To-day ; and every day, and all day long,
I still am chiding with her. "Child," I said,
And said it pretty roundly—it may be
I was too peremptory—we elder school-fellows,
Presuming on the advantage of a year

Or two, which, in that tender time, seem'd much,
In after years, much like to elder sisters,
Are prone to keep the authoritative style,
When time has made the difference most ridiculous—

Selby. The observation 's shrewd.

Mrs F. "Child," I was saying,
"If some wives had obtain'd a lot like yours,"
And then perhaps I sigh'd, "they would not sit
In corners moping, like to sullen moppets,
That want their will, but dry their eyes, and look
Their cheerful husbands in the face," perhaps
I said, their Selbys, "with proportion'd looks
Of honest joy."

Selby. You do suspect no jealousy ?

Mrs F. What is his import ? Whereto tends his speech ? [*Aside.*
Of whom, or what, should she be jealous, sir ?

Selby. I do not know, but women have their fancies ;
And underneath a cold indifference,
Or show of some distaste, husbands have mask'd
A growing fondness for a female friend,
Which the wife's eye was sharp enough to see,
Before the friend had wit to find it out.
You do not quit us soon ?

Mrs F. 'Tis as I find ;
Your Katherine profits by my lessons, sir.—
Means this man honest ? Is there no deceit ? [*Aside.*

Selby. She cannot choose. — Well, well, I have been thinking,
And if the matter were to do again—

Mrs F. What matter, sir ?

Selby. This idle bond of wedlock ;
These sour-sweet briars, fetters of harsh silk ;
I might have made, I do not say a better,
But a more fit choice in a wife.

Mrs F. The parch'd ground,
In hottest Julys, drinks not in the showers
More greedily than I his words! [*Aside.*
Selby. My humour
Is to be frank and jovial; and that man
Affects me best, who most reflects me in
My most free temper.
Mrs F. Were you free to choose,
As jestingly I'll put the supposition,
Without a thought reflecting on your Katherine,
What sort of Woman would you make your choice?
Selby. I like your humour, and will meet your jest.
She should be one about my Katherine's age;
But not so old, by some ten years, in gravity,
One that would meet my mirth, sometimes out run it;
No muling, pining moppet, as you said,
Nor moping maid that I must still be teaching
The freedoms of a wife all her life after:
But one that, having worn the chain before,
(And worn it lightly, as report gave out,)
Enfranchised from it by her poor fool's death,
Took it not so to heart that I need dread
To die myself, for fear a second time
To wet a widow's eye.
Mrs F. Some widows, sir,
Hearing you talk so wildly, would be apt
To put strange misconstruction on your words,
As aiming at a Turkish liberty,
Where the free husband hath his several mates,
His Penseroso, his Allegro wife,
To suit his sober or his frolic fit.
Selby. How judge you of that latitude?
Mrs F. As one,
To European customs bred, must judge. Had I
Been born a native of the liberal East,
I might have thought as they do. Yet I knew
A married man that took a second wife,

And (the man's circumstances duly weigh'd,
With all their bearings) the considerate world
Nor much approved, nor much condemn'd the deed.
Selby. You move my wonder strangely. Pray, proceed.
Mrs F. An eye of wanton liking he had placed
Upon a Widow, who liked him again,
But stood on terms of honourable love,
And scrupled wronging his most virtuous wife—
When to their ears a lucky rumour ran,
That this demure and saintly-seeming wife
Had a first husband living; with the which
Being question'd, she but faintly could deny.
"A priest indeed there was; some words had pass'd,
But scarce amounting to a marriage rite.
Her friend was absent; she supposed him dead;
And, seven years parted, both were free to choose."
Selby. What did the indignant husband? Did he not
With violent handlings stigmatise the cheek
Of the deceiving wife, who had entail'd
Shame on their innocent babe?
Mrs F. He neither tore
His wife's locks nor his own; but wisely weighing
His own offence with hers in equal poise,
And woman's weakness 'gainst the strength of man,
Came to a calm and witty compromise.
He coolly took his gay-faced widow home,
Made her his second wife; and still the first
Lost few or none of her prerogatives.
The servants call'd her mistress still; she kept
The keys, and had the total ordering
Of the house affairs; and, some slight toys excepted,
Was all a moderate wife would wish to be.
Selby. A tale full of dramatic incident!—
And if a man should put it in a play,
How should he name the parties?

Mrs F. The man's name
Through time I have forgot—the widow's too ;—
But his first wife's first name, her maiden one,
Was—not unlike to *that* your Katherine bore,
Before she took the honour'd style of Selby.
Selby. A dangerous meaning in your riddle lurks.
One knot is yet unsolved ; that told, this strange
And most mysterious drama ends. The name
Of that first husband—

Enter Lucy.

Mrs F. Sir, your pardon—
The allegory fits your private ear.
Some half hour hence, in the garden's secret walk,
We shall have leisure. [*Exit.*
Selby. Sister, whence come you ?
Lucy. From your poor Katherine's chamber, where she droops
In sad presageful thoughts, and sighs, and weeps,
And seems to pray by turns. At times she looks
As she would pour her secret in my bosom—
Then starts, as I have seen her, at the mention
Of some immodest act. At her request
I left her on her knees.
Selby. The fittest posture ;
For great has been her fault to Heaven and me.
She married me with a first husband living,
Or not known not to be so, which, in the judgment
Of any but indifferent honesty,
Must be esteem'd the same. The shallow Widow,
Caught by my art, under a riddling veil
Too thin to hide her meaning, hath confess'd all.
Your coming in broke off the conference,
When she was ripe to tell the fatal *name*
That seals my wedded doom.
Lucy. Was she so forward
To pour her hateful meanings in your ear

At the first hint?

Selby. Her newly flatter'd hopes
Array'd themselves at first in forms of doubt;
And with a female caution she stood off
Awhile, to read the meaning of my suit,
Which with such honest seeming I enforced,
That her cold scruples soon gave way; and now
She rests prepared, as mistress, or as wife,
To seize the place of her betrayèd friend—
My much offending, but more suffering, Katherine.

Lucy. Into what labyrinth of fearful shapes
My simple project has conducted you—
Were but my wit as skilful to invent
A clue to lead you forth!—I call to mind
A letter, which your wife received from the Cape,
Soon after you were married, with some circumstances
Of mystery too.

Selby. I well remember it.
That letter did confirm the truth (she said)
Of a friend's death, which she had long fear'd true,
But knew not for a fact. A youth of promise
She gave him out—a hot adventurous spirit—
That had set sail in quest of golden dreams,
And cities in the heart of Central Afric;
But named no names, nor did I care to press
My question further, in the passionate grief
She show'd at the receipt. Might this be he?

Lucy. Tears were not all. When that first shower was past,
With clasp'd hands she raised her eyes to Heav'n,
As if in thankfulness for some escape,
Or strange deliverance, in the news implied,
Which sweeten'd that sad news.

Selby. Something of that
I noted also—

Lucy. In her closet once,

Seeking some other trifle, I espied
A ring, in mournful characters deciphering
The death of "Robert Halford, aged two
And twenty." Brother, I am not given
To the confident use of wagers, which I hold
Unseemly in a woman's argument;
But I am strangely tempted now to risk
A thousand pounds out of my patrimony,
(And let my future husband look to it,
If it be lost,) that this immodest Widow
Shall name the name that tallies with that ring.

Selby. That wager lost, I should be rich indeed—
Rich in my rescued Kate—rich in my honour,
Which now was bankrupt. Sister, I accept
Your merry wager, with an aching heart
For very fear of winning. 'Tis the hour
That I should meet my Widow in the walk,
The south side of the garden. On some pretence
Lure forth my Wife that way, that she may witness
Our seeming courtship. Keep us still in sight,
Yourselves unseen; and by some sign I'll give,
(A finger held up, or a kerchief waved,)
You'll know your wager won—then break upon us,
As if by chance.

Lucy. I apprehend your meaning—

Selby. And may you prove a true Cassandra here,
Though my poor acres smart for 't, wagering sister!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—MRS SELBY'S *chamber.*

MRS FRAMPTON. KATHERINE.

Mrs F. Did I express myself in terms so strong?

Kath. As nothing could have more affrighted me.

Mrs F. Think it a hurt friend's jest, in retribution
Of a suspected cooling hospitality.
And, for my staying here, or going hence,

(Now I remember something of our argument,)
Selby and I can settle that between us.
You look amazed. What if your husband, child,
Himself hath courted me to stay?
Kath. You move
My wonder and my pleasure equally.
Mrs F. Yes, courted me to stay, waved all objections,
Made it a favour to yourselves; not me,
His troublesome guest, as you surmised. Child, child,
When I recall his flattering welcome, I
Begin to think the burden of my presence
Was—
Kath. What, for Heaven—
Mrs F. A little, little spice
Of jealousy—that's all—an honest pretext,
No wife need blush for. Say that you should see,
(As oftentimes we widows take such freedoms,
Yet still on this side virtue,) in a jest
Your husband pat me on the cheek, or steal
A kiss, while you were by,—not else, for virtue's sake.
Kath. I could endure all this, thinking my husband
Meant it in sport—
Mrs F. But if in downright earnest
(Putting myself out of the question here)
Your Selby, as I partly do suspect,
Own'd a divided heart—
Kath. My own would break—
Mrs F. Why, what a blind and witless fool it is,
That will not see its gains, its infinite gains—
Kath. Gain in a loss.
Or mirth in utter desolation!
Mrs F. He doating on a face—suppose it mine,
Or any other's tolerably fair—
What need you care about a senseless secret?
Kath. Perplex'd and fearful woman! I in part

Fathom your dangerous meaning. You have broke
The worse than iron band, fretting the soul,
By which you held me captive. Whether my husband
Is what you gave him out, or your fool'd fancy
But dreams he is so, either way I am free.
Mrs F. It talks it bravely, blazons out its shame;
A very heroine while on its knees;
Rowe's Penitent, an absolute Calista?
Kath. Not to thy wretched self these tears are falling;
But to my husband, and offended Heaven,
Some drops are due—and then I sleep in peace,
Relieved from frightful dreams, my dreams though sad. [*Exit.*
Mrs F. I have gone too far. Who knows but in this mood
She may forestall my story, win on Selby
By a frank confession?—and the time draws on
For our appointed meeting. The game's desperate,
For which I play. A moment's difference
May make it hers or mine. I fly to meet him.
[*Exit.*

SCENE.—*A garden.*

MR SELBY. MRS FRAMPTON.

Selby. I am not so ill a guesser, Mrs Frampton,
Not to conjecture, that some passages
In your unfinish'd story, rightly interpreted,
Glanced at my bosom's peace;
You knew my wife?
Mrs F. Even from her earliest school days—What of that?
Or how is she concern'd in my fine riddles,
Framed for the hour's amusement?
Selby. By my *hopes*

Of my new interest conceived in you,
And by the honest passion of my heart,
Which not obliquely I to you did hint;
Come from the clouds of misty allegory,
And in plain language let me hear the worst.
Stand I disgraced, or no?

Mrs F. Then by *my* hopes?
Of my new interest conceived in you,
And by the kindling passion in *my* breast,
Which through my riddles you had almost read,
Adjured so strongly, I will tell you all.
In her school years, then bordering on fifteen,
Or haply not much past, she loved a youth—

Selby. My most ingenuous Widow—

Mrs F. Met him oft
By stealth, where I still of the party was—

Selby. Prime confidant to all the school, I warrant,
And general go-between— [*Aside.*

Mrs F. One morn he came
In breathless haste. "The ship was under sail,
Or in a few hours would be, that must convey
Him and his destinies to barbarous shores,
Where, should he perish by inglorious hands,
It would be consolation in his death
To have call'd his Katherine *his.*"

Selby. Thus far the story
Tallies with what I hoped. [*Aside.*

Mrs F. Wavering between
The doubt of doing wrong, and losing him;
And my dissuasions not o'er hotly urged,
Whom he had flatter'd with the bride-maid's part;—

Selby. I owe my subtle Widow, then, for this.
[*Aside.*

Mrs F. Briefly, we went to church. The ceremony
Scarcely was huddled over, and the ring
Yet cold upon her finger, when they parted—

He to his ship ; and we to school got back,
Scarce miss'd, before the dinner-bell could ring.
Selby. And from that hour—
Mrs F. Nor sight, nor news of him,
For aught that I could hear, she e'er obtain'd.
Selby. Like to a man that hovers in suspense
Over a letter just received, on which
The black seal hath impress'd its ominous token,
Whether to open it or no, so I
Suspended stand, whether to press my fate
Further, or check ill curiosity,
That tempts me to more loss.—The name, the name
Of this fine youth ?
Mrs F. What boots it, if 'twere told ?
Selby. Now, by our loves,
And by my hopes of happier wedlocks, some day
To be accomplish'd, give me his name !
Mrs F. 'Tis no such serious matter. It was—
Huntingdon.
Selby. How have three little syllables pluck'd from me
A world of countless hopes !— [*Aside.*
Evasive Widow.
Mrs F. How, sir !—I like not this. [*Aside.*
Selby. No, no, I meant
Nothing but good to thee. That other woman,
How shall I call her but evasive, false,
And treacherous ?—by the trust I place in thee,
Tell me, and tell me truly, was the name
As you pronounced it ?
Mrs F. Huntingdon—the name,
Which his paternal grandfather assumed,
Together with the estates of a remote
Kinsman : but our high-spirited youth—
Selby. Yes—
Mrs F. Disdaining
For sordid pelf to truck the family honours,

At risk of the lost estates, resumed the old style,
And answer'd only to the name of—
Selby. What—
Mrs F. Of Halford—
Selby. A Huntingdon to Halford changed so soon!
Why, then I see, a witch hath her good spells,
As well as bad, and can by a backward charm
Unruffle the foul storm she has just been raising.
[*Aside. He makes the signal.*
My frank, fair-spoken Widow! let this kiss,
Which yet aspires no higher, speak my thanks,
Till I can think on greater.

Enter LUCY *and* KATHERINE.

Mrs F. Interrupted!
Selby. My sister here! and see, where with her comes
My serpent gliding in an angel's form,
To taint the new-born Eden of our joys.
Why should we fear them? We'll not stir a foot,
Nor coy it for their pleasures. [*He courts the Widow.*
Lucy (*to Katherine*). This your free,
And sweet ingenuous confession, binds me
For ever to you; and it shall go hard,
But it shall fetch you back your husband's heart,
That now seems blindly straying; or, at worst,
In me you have still a sister.—Some wives, brother,
Would think it strange to catch their husbands thus
Alone with a trim widow; but your Katherine
Is arm'd, I think, with patience.
Kath. I am fortified
With knowledge of self-faults to endure worse wrongs,
If they be wrongs, than he can lay upon me;
Even to look on, and see him sue in earnest,
As now I think he does it but in seeming,
To that ill woman.

Mrs. F. Interrupted!

C.E. Brock 1903

Selby. Good words, gentle Kate,
And not a thought irreverent of our Widow.
Why 'twere unmannerly at any time,
But most uncourteous on our wedding day,
When we should show most hospitable.—Some wine!
[*Wine is brought.*
I am for sports. And now I do remember,
The old Egyptians at their banquets placed
A charnel sight of dead men's skulls before them,
With images of cold mortality,
To temper their fierce joys when they grew rampant.
I like the custom well: and ere we crown
With freer mirth the day, I shall propose,
In calmest recollection of her spirits,
We drink the solemn "Memory of the Dead"—
Mrs F. Or the supposed dead— [*Aside to him.*
Selby. Pledge me, good wife—[*She fills.*
Nay, higher yet, till the brimm'd cup swell o'er.
Kath. I catch the awful import of your words;
And, though I could accuse you of unkindness,
Yet as your lawful and obedient wife,
While that name last (as I perceive it fading,
Nor I much longer may have leave to use it)
I calmly take the office you impose;
And on my knees, imploring their forgiveness,
Whom I in heaven or earth may have offended,
Exempt from starting tears, and woman's weakness,
I pledge you, sir—the Memory of the Dead!
[*She drinks kneeling.*
Selby. 'Tis gently and discreetly said, and like
My former loving Kate.
Mrs F. Does he relent? [*Aside.*
Selby. That ceremony past, we give the day
To unabated sport. And, in requital
Of certain stories and quaint allegories,
Which my rare Widow hath been telling to me
To raise my morning mirth, if she will lend

Her patient hearing, I will here recite
A Parable ; and, the more to suit her taste,
The scene is laid in the East.
Mrs F. I long to hear it.
Some tale, to fit his wife. [*Aside.*
Kath. Now, comes my TRIAL.
Lucy. The hour of your deliverance is at hand,
If I presage right. Bear up, gentlest sister.
Selby. "The Sultan Haroun"—Stay—O now I have it—
"The Caliph Haroun in his orchards had
A fruit-tree, bearing such delicious fruits,
That he reserved them for his proper gust ;
And through the Palace it was Death proclaim'd
To any one that should purloin the same."
Mrs F. A heavy penance for so light a fault—
Selby. Pray you, be silent, else you put me out.
"A crafty page, that for advantage watch'd,
Detected in the act a brother page,
Of his own years, that was his bosom friend ;
And thenceforth he became that other's lord,
And like a tyrant he demean'd himself,
Laid forced exactions on his fellow's purse ;
And when that poor means fail'd, held o'er his head
Threats of impending death in hideous forms ;
Till the small culprit on his nightly couch
Dream'd of strange pains, and felt his body writhe
In tortuous pangs around the impaling stake."
Mrs F. I like not this beginning—
Selby. Pray you, attend.
"The Secret, like a night-hag, rid his sleeps,
And took the youthful pleasures from his days,
And chased the youthful smoothness from his brow,
That from a rose-cheek'd boy he waned and waned
To a pale skeleton of what he was ;
And would have died, but for one lucky chance."
Kath. Oh !

Mrs F. Your wife—she faints—some cordial—smell to this.

Selby. Stand off. My sister best will do that office.

Mrs F. Are all his tempting speeches come to this? [*Aside.*

Selby. What ail'd my wife?

Kath. A warning faintness, sir,
Seized on my spirits, when you came to where
You said "a lucky chance." I am better now:
Please you go on.

Selby. The sequel shall be brief.

Kath. But, brief, or long, I feel my fate hangs on it. [*Aside.*

Selby. "One morn the Caliph, in a covert hid,
Close by an arbour where the two boys talk'd,
(As oft, we read, that Eastern sovereigns
Would play the eaves-dropper, to learn the truth,
Imperfectly received from mouths of slaves,)
O'erheard their dialogue; and heard enough
To judge aright the cause, and know his cue.
The following day a Cadi was despatch'd
To summon both before the judgment-seat;
The lickerish culprit, almost dead with fear,
And the informing friend, who readily,
Fired with fair promises of large reward,
And Caliph's love, the hateful truth disclosed."

Mrs F. What did the Caliph to the offending boy,
That had so grossly err'd?

Selby. His sceptred hand
He forth in token of forgiveness stretch'd,
And clapp'd his cheeks, and courted him with gifts,
And he became once more his favourite page.

Mrs F. But for that other—

Selby. He dismiss'd him straight,
From dreams of grandeur, and of Caliph's love,
To the bare cottage on the withering moor,

Where friends, turn'd fiends, and hollow confidants,
And widows, hide, who in a husband's ear
Pour baneful truths, but tell not all the truth ;
And told him not that Robin Halford died
Some moons before *his* marriage-bells were rung.
Too near dishonour hast thou trod, dear wife,
And on a dangerous cast our fates were set ;
But Heav'n, that will'd our wedlock to be blest,
Hath interposed to save it gracious too.
Your penance is—to dress your cheek in smiles,
And to be once again my merry Kate.—
Sister, your hand.
Your wager won makes me a happy man,
Though poorer, Heav'n knows, by a thousand pounds.
The sky clears up after a dubious day.
Widow, your hand. I read a penitence
In this dejected brow ; and in this shame
Your fault is buried. You shall in with us,
And, if it please you, taste our nuptial fare :
For, till this moment, I can joyful say,
Was never truly Selby's Wedding Day.

THE PAWNBROKER'S DAUGHTER

A FARCE

CHARACTERS.

FLINT, *a Pawnbroker.*
DAVENPORT, *in love with* MARIAN.
PENDULOUS, *a Reprieved Gentleman.*
CUTLET, *a Sentimental Butcher.*
GOLDING, *a Magistrate.*
WILLIAM, *Apprentice to Flint.*
BEN, *Cutlet's Boy.*
MISS FLYN.
BETTY, *her Maid.*
MARIAN, *Daughter to Flint.*
LUCY, *her Maid.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at* FLINT'S *house.*

FLINT. WILLIAM.

Flint. Carry those umbrellas, cottons, and wearing-apparel, up stairs. You may send that chest of tools to Robins's.

Wil. That which you lent six pounds upon to the journeyman carpenter that had the sick wife?

Flint. The same.

Wil. The man says, if you can give him till Thursday——

Flint. Not a minute longer. His time was out yesterday. These improvident fools!

Wil. The finical gentleman has been here about the seal that was his grandfather's.

Flint. He cannot have it. Truly, our trade would be brought to a fine pass, if we were bound to humour the fancies of our customers. This man would be taking a liking to a snuff-box that he had inherited; and that gentlewoman might conceit a favourite chemise that had descended to her.

Wil. The lady in the carriage has been here crying about those jewels. She says, if you cannot let her have them at the advance she offers, her husband will come to know that she has pledged them.

Flint. I have uses for those jewels. Send Marian to me. (*Exit* WILLIAM.) I know no other trade that is expected to depart from its fair advantages but ours. I do not see the baker, the butcher, the shoemaker, or, to go higher, the lawyer, the physician, the divine, give up any of their legitimate gains, even when the pretences of their art had failed; yet *we* are to be branded with an odious name, stigmatized, discountenanced even by the administrators of those laws which acknowledge us; scowled at by the lower sort of people, whose needs we serve!

Enter MARIAN.

Come hither, Marian. Come, kiss your father. The report runs that he is full of spotted crime. What is your belief, child?

Mar. That never good report went with our calling, father. I have heard you say, the poor look only to the advantages which we derive from them, and overlook the accommodations which they receive from us. But the poor *are* the poor, father, and have little leisure to make distinctions. I wish we could give up this business.

Flint. You have not seen that idle fellow, Davenport?

Mar. No, indeed, father, since your injunction.

Flint— You have not seen that idle fellow, Davenport?

Flint. I take but my lawful profit. The law is not over favourable to us.

Mar. Marian is no judge of these things.

Flint. They call me oppressive, grinding—I know not what——

Mar. Alas!

Flint. Usurer, extortioner. Am I these things?

Mar. You are Marian's kind and careful father. That is enough for a child to know.

Flint. Here, girl, is a little box of jewels, which the necessities of a foolish woman of quality have transferred into our true and lawful possession. Go, place them with the trinkets that were your mother's. They are all yours, Marian, if you do not cross me in your marriage. No gentry shall match into this house, to flout their wife hereafter with her parentage. I will hold this business with convulsive grasp to my dying day. I will plague these *poor*, whom you speak so tenderly of.

Mar. You frighten me, father. Do not frighten Marian.

Flint. I have heard them say, There goes Flint—Flint, the cruel pawnbroker!

Mar. Stay at home with Marian. You shall hear no ugly words to vex you.

Flint. You shall ride in a gilded chariot upon the necks of these *poor*, Marian. Their tears shall drop pearls for my girl. Their sighs shall be good wind for us. They shall blow good for my girl. Put up the jewels, Marian. [*Exit.*

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Miss, miss, your father has taken his hat, and is stept out, and Mr Davenport is on the stairs; and I came to tell you——

Mar. Alas! who let him in?

Enter DAVENPORT.

Dav. My dearest girl——

Mar. My father will kill me, if he finds you have been here!

Dav. There is no time for explanations. I have positive information that your father means, in less than a week, to dispose of you to that ugly Saunders. The wretch has bragged of it to his acquaintance, and already calls you *his*.

Mar. O heavens!

Dav. Your resolution must be summary, as the time which calls for it. Mine or his you must be, without delay. There is no safety for you under this roof.

Mar. My father——

Dav. Is no father, if he would sacrifice you.

Mar. But he is unhappy. Do not speak hard words of my father.

Dav. Marian must exert her good sense.

Lucy (*as if watching at the window*). O, miss, your father has suddenly returned. I see him with Mr Saunders, coming down the street. Mr Saunders, ma'am!

Mar. Begone, begone, if you love me, Davenport.

Dav. You must go with me then, else here I am fixed.

Lucy. Aye, miss, you must go, as Mr Davenport says. Here is your cloak, miss, and your hat, and your gloves. Your father, ma'am——

Mar. Oh, where, where? Whither do you hurry me, Davenport?

Dav. Quickly, quickly, Marian. At the back door.—

[*Exit* MARIAN, *with* DAVENPORT, *reluctantly; in her flight still holding the jewels.*

Lucy. Away—away. What a lucky thought of

mine to say her father was coming! he would never have got her off, else. Lord, Lord, I do love to help lovers. [*Exit, following them.*

SCENE II.—*A Butcher's Shop.*

CUTLET. BEN.

Cut. Reach me down that book off the shelf, where the shoulder of veal hangs.

Ben. Is this it?

Cut. No—this is "Flowers of Sentiment"—the other—aye, this is a good book. "An Argument against the Use of Animal Food. By J. R." *That* means Joseph Ritson. I will open it anywhere, and read just as it happens. One cannot dip amiss in such books as these. The motto, I see, is from Pope. I daresay, very much to the purpose (*Reads.*)

> The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,
> Had he thy reason, would he sport and play?
> Pleas'd to the last, he crops his flowery food,
> And licks the hand ——

Bless us, is that saddle of mutton gone home to Mrs Simpson's? It should have gone an hour ago.

Ben. I was just going with it.

Cut. Well go. Where was I? Oh!

> And licks the hand just raised to shed its blood.

What an affecting picture! (*turns over the leaves, and reads.*) "It is probable that the long lives which are recorded of the people before the flood, were owing to their being confined to a vegetable diet."

Ben. The young gentleman in Pullen's Row, Islington, that has got the consumption, has sent to know if you can let him have a sweetbread.

Cut. Take two,—take all that are in the shop. What a disagreeable interruption! (*reads again.*) "Those fierce and angry passions, which impel man to wage destructive war with man, may be traced

to the ferment in the blood produced by an animal diet."

Ben. The two pound of rump-steaks must go home to Mr Molyneux's. He is in training to fight Cribb.

Cut. Well, take them ; go along, and do not trouble me with your disgusting details. [*Exit* BEN.

Cut. (*throwing down the book.*) Why was I bred to this detestable business? Was it not plain, that this trembling sensibility, which has marked my character from earliest infancy, must for ever disqualify me for a profession which——what do ye want? what do ye buy? O, it is only somebody going past. I thought it had been a customer.—Why was not I bred a glover, like my cousin Langston? to see him poke his two little sticks into a delicate pair of real Woodstock——"A very little stretching, ma'am, and they will fit exactly"——Or a haberdasher, like my next-door neighbour—"not a better bit of lace in all town, my lady—Mrs Breadstock took the last of it last Friday, all but this bit, which I can afford to let your ladyship have a bargain—reach down that drawer on your left hand, Miss Fisher."

Enter, in haste, DAVENPORT, MARIAN, *and* LUCY.

Lucy. This is the house I saw a bill up at, ma'am ; and a droll creature the landlord is.

Dav. We have no time for nicety.

Cut. What do ye want? what do ye buy? O, it is only you, Mrs Lucy.

[LUCY *whispers* CUTLET.

Cut. I have a set of apartments at the end of my garden. They are quite detached from the shop. A single lady at present occupies the ground floor.

Mar. Aye, aye, anywhere.

Dav. In, in.—

Cut. Pretty lamb,—she seems agitated.

DAVENPORT *and* MARIAN *go in with* CUTLET.

Lucy. I am mistaken if my young lady does not find an agreeable companion in these apartments. Almost a namesake. Only the difference of Flyn, and Flint. I have some errands to do, or I would stop and have some fun with this droll butcher.

CUTLET *returns.*

Cut. Why, how odd this is! *Your* young lady knows *my* young lady. They are as thick as flies.

Lucy. You may thank me for your new lodger, Mr Cutlet.—But bless me, you do not look well!

Cut. To tell you the truth, I am rather heavy about the eyes. Want of sleep, I believe.

Lucy. Late hours, perhaps. Raking last night.

Cut. No, that is not it, Mrs Lucy. My repose was disturbed by a very different cause from what you may imagine. It proceeded from too much thinking.

Lucy. The deuce it did! and what, if I may be so bold, might be the subject of your Night Thoughts?

Cut. The distresses of my fellow-creatures. I never lay my head down on my pillow, but I fall a-thinking, how many at this very instant are perishing. Some with cold——

Lucy. What, in the midst of summer?

Cut. Aye. Not here, but in countries abroad, where the climate is different from ours. Our summers are their winters, and *vice-versa*, you know. Some with cold——

Lucy. What a canting rogue it is! I should like to trump up some fine story to plague him (*Aside*).

Cut. Others with hunger—some a prey to the rage of wild beasts——

Lucy. He has got this by rote, out of some book.

Cut. Some drowning, crossing crazy bridges in

the dark—some by the violence of the devouring flame——

Lucy. I have it.—For that matter, you need not send your humanity a travelling, Mr Cutlet. For instance, last night——

Cut. Some by fevers, some by gun-shot wounds——

Lucy. Only two streets off——

Cut. Some in drunken quarrels——

Lucy (*Aloud*). The butcher's shop at the corner.

Cut. What were you saying about poor Cleaver?

Lucy. He has found his ears at last (*Aside*). That he has had his house burnt down.

Cut. Bless me!

Lucy. I saw four small children taken in at the green grocer's.

Cut. Do you know if he is insured?

Lucy. Some say he is, but not to the full amount.

Cut. Not to the full amount—how shocking! He killed more meat than any of the trade between here and Carnaby market—and the poor babes—four of them you say—what a melting sight!—he served some good customers about Marybone—I always think more of the children in these cases than of the fathers and mothers—Lady Lovebrown liked his veal better than any man's in the market—I wonder whether her ladyship is engaged—I must go and comfort poor Cleaver, however.— [*Exit*.

Lucy. Now is this pretender to humanity gone to avail himself of a neighbour's supposed ruin to inveigle his customers from him. Fine feelings!—pshaw! [*Exit*.

Re-enter CUTLET.

Cut. What a deceitful young hussey! there is not a word of truth in her. There has been no fire. How can people play with one's feelings so!—(*sings*) —"For tenderness formed"—No, I'll try the air

I made upon myself. The words may compose me.
—(*sings.*)

A weeping Londoner I am,
A washer-woman was my dam;
She bred me up in a cock-loft,
And fed my mind with sorrows soft:

For when she wrung with elbows stout
From linen wet the water out,—
The drops so like to tears did drip,
They gave my infant nerves the hyp.

Scarce three clean muckingers a week
Would dry the brine that dew'd my cheek:
So, while I gave my sorrows scope,
I almost ruin'd her in soap.

My parish learning I did win
In ward of Farringdon-Within;
Where, after school, I did pursue
My sports, as little boys will do.

Cockchafers—none like me was found
To set them spinning round and round.
O how my tender heart would melt,
To think what those poor varmin felt!

I never tied tin-kettle, clog,
Or salt-box to the tail of dog,
Without a pang more keen at heart,
Than he felt at his outward part.

And when the poor thing clattered off,
To all the unfeeling mob a scoff,
Thought I, "What that dumb creature feels,
With half the parish at his heels!"

Arrived, you see, to man's estate,
The butcher's calling is my fate;
Yet still I keep my feeling ways,
And leave the town on slaughtering days.

At Kentish Town, or Highgate Hill,
I sit, retired, beside some rill;
And tears bedew my glistening eye,
To think my playful lambs must die!

But when they're dead I sell their meat,
On shambles kept both clean and neat;
Sweet-breads also I guard full well,
And keep them from the blue-bottle.

Envy, with breath sharp as my steel,
Has ne'er yet blown upon my veal;
And mouths of dames, and daintiest fops,
Do water at my nice lamb-chops.

[*Exit, half laughing, half crying.*

SCENE.—*A Street.*

DAVENPORT, *solus.*

Dav. Thus far have I secured my charming prize. I can appreciate, while I lament, the delicacy which makes her refuse the protection of my sister's roof. But who comes here?

Enter PENDULOUS, *agitated.*

It must be he. That fretful animal motion—that face working up and down with uneasy sensibility, like new yeast. Jack—Jack Pendulous!

Pen. It is your old friend, and very miserable.

Dav. Vapours, Jack. I have not known you fifteen years to have to guess at your complaint. Why, they troubled you at school. Do you remember when you had to speak the speech of Buckingham, where he is going to execution?

Pen. Execution!—he has certainly heard it. (*Aside.*)

Dav. What a pucker you were in overnight!

Pen. May be so, may be so, Mr Davenport. That was an imaginary scene. I have had real troubles since.

Dav. Pshaw! so you call every common accident.

Pen. Do you call my case so common, then?

Dav. What case?

Pen. You have not heard, then?

Dav. Positively not a word.

Pen. You must know I have been—(*whispers*)—tried for a felony since then.

Dav. Nonsense!

Pen. No subject for mirth, Mr Davenport. A confounded short-sighted fellow swore that I stopt him, and robbed him, on the York race-ground at nine on a fine moonlight evening, when I was two hundred miles off in Dorsetshire. These hands have been held up at a common bar.

Dav. Ridiculous! it could not have gone so far.

Pen. A great deal farther, I assure you, Mr Davenport. I am ashamed to say how far it went. You must know, that in the first shock and surprise of the accusation, shame—you know I was always susceptible—shame put me upon disguising my *name*, that, at all events, it might bring no disgrace upon my family. I called myself *James Thomson*.

Dav. For heaven's sake, compose yourself.

Pen. I will. An old family ours, Mr Davenport—never had a blot upon it till now—a family famous for the jealousy of its honour for many generations—think of that, Mr Davenport—that felt a stain like a wound—

Dav. Be calm, my dear friend.

Pen. This served the purpose of a temporary concealment well enough; but when it came to the—*alibi*—I think they call it—excuse these technical terms, they are hardly fit for the mouth of a gentleman, the *witnesses*—that is another term—that I had sent for up from Melcombe Regis, and relied upon for clearing up my character, by disclosing my real name, *John Pendulous*—so discredited the cause which they came to serve, that it had quite a contrary effect to what was intended. In short, the usual forms passed, and you behold me here the miserablest of mankind.

Dav. (*Aside*). He must be light-headed.

Pen. Not at all, Mr Davenport. I hear what you say, though you speak it all on one side, as they do at the playhouse.

Dav. The sentence could never have been carried into—pshaw !—you are joking—the truth must have come out at last.

Pen. So it did, Mr Davenport—just two minutes and a second too late by the Sheriff's stop-watch. Time enough to save my life—my wretched life—but an age too late for my honour. Pray, change the subject —the detail must be as offensive to you.

Dav. With all my heart, to a more pleasing theme. The lovely Maria Flyn—are you friends in that quarter, still ? Have the old folks relented ?

Pen. They are dead, and have left her mistress of her inclinations. But it requires great strength of mind to——

Dav. To what ?

Pen. To stand up against the sneers of the world. It is not every young lady that feels herself confident against the shafts of ridicule, though aimed by the hand of prejudice. Not but in her heart, I believe, she prefers me to all mankind. But think what the world would say, if, in defiance of the opinions of mankind, she should take to her arms a—reprieved man !

Dav. Whims ! You might turn the laugh of the world upon itself in a fortnight. These things are but nine days' wonders.

Pen. Do you think so, Mr Davenport ?

Dav. Where does she live ?

Pen. She has lodgings in the next street, in a sort of garden-house, that belongs to one Cutlet. I have not seen her since the affair. I was going there at her request.

Dav. Ha, ha, ha !

Pen. Why do you laugh?

Dav. The oddest fellow! I will tell you—But here he comes.

Enter CUTLET.

Cut. (*to Davenport*). Sir, the young lady at my house is desirous you should return immediately. She has heard something from home.

Pen. What do I hear?

Dav. 'Tis her fears, I daresay. My dear Pendulous, you will excuse me?—I must not tell him our situation at present, though it cost him a fit of jealousy. We shall have fifty opportunities for explanation.

[*Exit.*

Pen. Does that gentleman visit the lady at your lodgings?

Cut. He is quite familiar there, I assure you. He is all in all with her, as they say.

Pen. It is but too plain. Fool that I have been, not to suspect that, while she pretended scruples, some rival was at the root of her infidelity!

Cut. You seem distressed, sir? Bless me!

Pen. I am, friend, above the reach of comfort.

Cut. Consolation, then, can be to no purpose?

Pen. None.

Cut. I am so happy to have met with him!

Pen. Wretch, wretch, wretch!

Cut. There he goes! How he walks about biting his nails! I would not exchange this luxury of unavailing pity for worlds.

Pen. Stigmatized by the world——

Cut. My case exactly. Let us compare notes.

Pen. For an accident which——

Cut. For a profession which——

Pen. In the eye of reason has nothing in it——

Cut. Absolutely nothing in it——

Pen. Brought up at a public bar——

Cut. Brought up to an odious trade——

Pen. With nerves like mine——

Cut. With nerves like mine——

Pen. Arraigned, condemned——

Cut. By a foolish world——

Pen. By a judge and jury——

Cut. By an invidious exclusion disqualified for sitting upon a jury at all——

Pen. Tried, cast, and——

Cut. What?

Pen. HANGED, sir, HANGED by the neck, till I was——

Cut. Bless me!

Pen. Why should not I publish it to the whole world, since she, whose prejudice alone I wished to overcome, deserts me?

Cut. Lord have mercy upon us! not so bad as that comes to, I hope?

Pen. When she joins in the judgment of an illiberal world against me——

Cut. You said HANGED, sir—that is, I mean, perhaps I mistook you. How ghastly he looks!

Pen. Fear me not, my friend. I am no ghost—though I heartily wish I were one.

Cut. Why, then, ten to one you were——

Pen. Cut down. The odious word shall out though it choak me.

Cut. Your case must have some things in it very curious. I daresay you kept a journal of your sensations.

Pen. Sensations!

Cut. Aye, while you were being—you know what I mean. They say persons in your situation have lights dancing before their eyes—blueish. But then the worst of all is coming to one's self again.

Pen. Plagues, furies, tormentors! I shall go mad! [*Exit.*

Cut. There, he says he shall go mad. Well, my head has not been very right of late. It goes with a whirl and a buz somehow. I believe I must not think so deeply. Common people that don't reason know nothing of these aberrations.

> Great wits go mad, and small ones only dull;
> Distracting cares vex not the empty skull:
> They seize on heads that think, and hearts that feel,
> As flies attack the—better sort of veal. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE, *at* FLINT'S.

FLINT. WILLIAM.

Flint. I have overwalked myself, and am quite exhausted. Tell Marian to come and play to me.

Wil. I shall, sir. [*Exit.*

Flint. I have been troubled with an evil spirit of late; I think, an evil spirit. It goes and comes, as my daughter is with or from me. It cannot stand before her gentle look, when, to please her father, she takes down her music-book.

Enter WILLIAM.

Wil. Miss Marian went out soon after you, and is not returned.

Flint. That is a pity—That is a pity. Where can the foolish girl be gadding?

Wil. The shopmen say she went out with Mr Davenport.

Flint. Davenport? Impossible.

Wil. They say they are sure it was he, by the same token that they saw her slip into his hand, when she was past the door, the casket which you gave her.

Flint. Gave her, William? I only intrusted it to

her. She has robbed me. Marian is a thief. You must go to the Justice, William, and get out a warrant against her immediately. Do you help them in the description. Put in "Marian Flint," in plain words —no remonstrances, William—"daughter of Reuben Flint,"—no remonstrances, but do it——

Wil. Nay, sir——

Flint. I am rock, absolute rock, to all that you can say—A piece of solid rock.—What is it that makes my legs to fail, and my whole frame to totter thus? It has been my over walking. I am very faint. Support me in, William. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Apartment of* MISS FLYN.

MISS FLYN. BETTY.

Miss F. 'Tis past eleven. Every minute I expect Mr Pendulous here. What a meeting do I anticipate!

Betty. Anticipate, truly! what other than a joyful meeting can it be between two agreed lovers who have been parted these four months?

Miss F. But in that cruel space what accidents have happened!—(*aside*)—As yet I perceive she is ignorant of this unfortunate affair.

Betty. Lord, madam, what accidents? He has not had a fall or a tumble, has he? He is not coming upon crutches?

Miss F. Not exactly a fall—(*aside*)—I wish I had courage to admit her to my confidence.

Betty. If his neck is whole, his heart is so too, I warrant it.

Miss F. His neck!—(*aside*)—She certainly mistrusts something. He writes me word that this must be his last interview.

Betty. Then I guess the whole business. The

wretch is unfaithful. Some creature or other has got him into a noose.

Miss F. A noose !

Betty. And I shall never more see him hang——

Miss F. Hang, did you say, Betty ?

Betty. About that dear, fond neck, I was going to add, madam, but you interrupted me.

Miss F. I can no longer labour with a secret which oppresses me thus. Can you be trusty ?

Betty. Who, I, madam ?—(*aside*)—Lord, I am so glad. Now I shall know all.

Miss F. This letter discloses the reason of his unaccountable long absence from me. Peruse it, and say if we have not reason to be unhappy.

[BETTY *retires to the window to read the letter*, Mr PENDULOUS *enters.*

Miss F. My dear Pendulous !

Pen. Maria !—nay, shun the embraces of a disgraced man, who comes but to tell you that you must renounce his society for ever.

Miss F. Nay, Pendulous, avoid me not.

Pen. (*aside*). That was tender. I may be mistaken. Whilst I stood on honourable terms, Maria might have met my caresses without a blush.

[BETTY, *who has not attended to the entrance of* PENDULOUS, *through her eagerness to read the letter, comes forward.*

Betty. Ha ! ha ! ha ! What a funny story, madam ; and is this all you make such a fuss about ? I should not care if twenty of my lovers had been——(*seeing* PENDULOUS.)—Lord, sir, I ask pardon.

Pen. Are we not alone, then ?

Miss F. 'Tis only Betty—my old servant. You remember Betty ?

Pen. What letter is that ?

Miss F. O ! something from her sweetheart, I suppose.

Betty. Yes, ma'am, that is all. I shall die of laughing.

Pen. You have not surely been showing her——

Miss F. I must be ingenuous. You must know, then, that I was just giving Betty a hint—as you came in.

Pen. A hint!

Miss F. Yes, of our unfortunate embarrassment.

Pen. My letter!

Miss F. I thought it as well that she should know it at first.

Pen. 'Tis mighty well, madam. 'Tis as it should be. I was ordained to be a wretched laughing-stock to all the world; and it is fit that our drabs and our servant wenches should have their share of the amusement.

Betty. Marry come up! Drabs and servant wenches! and this from a person in his circumstances!

[BETTY *flings herself out of the room, muttering.*

Miss F. I understand not this language. I was prepared to give my Pendulous a tender meeting. To assure him, that however, in the eyes of the superficial and the censorious, he may have incurred a partial degradation, in the esteem of one, at least, he stood as high as ever. That it was not in the power of a ridiculous *accident*, involving no guilt, no shadow of imputation, to separate two hearts, cemented by holiest vows, as ours have been. This untimely repulse to my affections may awaken scruples in me, which hitherto, in tenderness to you, I have suppressed.

Pen. I very well understand what you call tenderness, madam; but in some situations, pity—pity—is the greatest insult.

Miss F. I can endure no longer. When you are in a calmer mood, you will be sorry that you have wrung my heart so. [*Exit.*

Pen. Maria!—She is gone—in tears—Yet it seems

she has had her scruples. She said she had tried to smother them. Her maid Betty intimated as much.

Re-enter BETTY.

Betty. Never mind Betty, sir; depend upon it she will never 'peach.

Pen. 'Peach!

Betty. Lord, sir, these scruples will blow over. Go to her again, when she is in a better humour. You know we must stand off a little at first, to save appearances.

Pen. Appearances! *we!*

Betty. It will be decent to let some time elapse.

Pen. Time elapse!

> Lost, wretched Pendulous! to scorn betrayed,
> The scoff alike of mistress and of maid!
> What now remains for thee, forsaken man,
> But to complete thy fate's abortive plan,
> And finish what the feeble law began? [*Exeunt.*

Re-enter MISS FLYN, *with* MARIAN.

Miss F. Now both our lovers are gone, I hope my friend will have less reserve. You must consider this apartment as yours while you stay here. 'Tis larger and more commodious than your own.

Mar. You are kind, Maria. My sad story I have troubled you with. I have some jewels here, which I unintentionally brought away. I have only to beg, that you will take the trouble to restore them to my father; and, without disclosing my present situation, to tell him, that my next step—with or without the concurrence of Mr Davenport—shall be to throw myself at his feet, and beg to be forgiven. I dare not see him till you have explored the way for me. I am convinced I was tricked into this elopement.

Miss F. Your commands shall be obeyed implicitly.

Mar. You are good (*agitated*).

Miss F. Moderate your apprehensions, my sweet friend. I too have known my sorrows—(*smiling.*)—You have heard of the ridiculous affair.

Mar. Between Mr. Pendulous and you? Davenport informed me of it, and we both took the liberty of blaming the over-niceness of your scruples.

Miss F. You mistake. The refinement is entirely on the part of my lover. He thinks me not nice enough. I am obliged to feign a little reluctance, that he may not take quite a distaste to me. Will you believe it, that he turns my very constancy into a reproach, and declares, that a woman must be devoid of all delicacy, that, after a thing of that sort, could endure the sight of her husband in——

Mar. In what?

Miss F. The sight of a man at all in——

Mar. I comprehend you not.

Miss F. In—in a—(*whispers*)—night-cap, my dear; and now the mischief is out.

Mar. Is there no way to cure him?

Miss F. None, unless I were to try the experiment, by placing myself in the hands of justice for a little while, how far an equality in misfortune might breed a sympathy in sentiment. Our reputations would be both upon a level then, you know. What think you of a little innocent shop-lifting, in sport?

Mar. And by that contrivance to be taken before a magistrate? the project sounds oddly.

Miss F. And yet I am more than half persuaded it is feasible.

Enter BETTY.

Betty. Mr Davenport is below, ma'am, and desires to speak with you.

Mar. You will excuse me—(*going—turning back.*)—You will remember the casket? [*Exit.*

Miss F. Depend on me.

Betty. And a strange man desires to see you, ma'am. I do not half like his looks.

Miss F. Show him in.

[*Exit* BETTY, *and returns with a Police Officer.* BETTY *goes out.*

Officer. Your servant, ma'am. Your name is——

Miss F. Flyn, sir. Your business with me?

Off. (*alternately surveying the lady and his paper of instructions*). Marian Flint.

Miss F. Maria Flyn.

Off. Aye, aye, Flyn or Flint. 'Tis all one. Some write plain Mary, and some put ann after it. I come about a casket.

Miss F. I guess the whole business. He takes me for my friend. Something may come out of this. I will humour him.

Off. (*aside*)—Answers the description to a tittle. "Soft, grey eyes, pale complexion,"——

Miss F. Yet I have been told by flatterers that my eyes were blue—(*takes out a pocket-glass*).—I hope I look pretty tolerably to-day.

Off. Blue!—they are a sort of blueish-gray, now I look better, and as for colour, that comes and goes. Blushing is often a sign of a hardened offender. Do you know any thing of a casket?

Miss F. Here is one which a friend has just delivered to my keeping.

Off. And which I must beg leave to secure, together with your ladyship's person. "Garnets, pearls, diamond-bracelet,"—here they are, sure enough.

Miss F. Indeed, I am innocent.

Off. Every man is presumed so till he is found otherwise.

Miss F. Police wit! have you a warrant?

Off. Tolerably cool that! Here it is, signed by Justice Golding, at the requisition of Reuben Flint, who deposes that you have robbed him.

Miss F. How lucky this turns out !—(*aside.*)—Can I be indulged with a coach ?

Off. To Marlborough Street ? certainly—an old offender—(*aside*)—The thing shall be conducted with as much delicacy as is consistent with security.

Miss F. Police manners ! I will trust myself to your protection then. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*Police-Office.*

JUSTICE, FLINT, OFFICERS, &c.

Just. Before we proceed to extremities, Mr Flint, let me entreat you to consider the consequences. What will the world say to your exposing your own child ?

Flint. The world is not my friend. I belong to a profession which has long brought me acquainted with its injustice. I return scorn for scorn, and desire its censure above its plaudits.

Just. But in this case delicacy must make you pause.

Flint. Delicacy—ha ! ha !—pawnbroker—how fitly these words suit. Delicate pawnbroker—delicate devil—let the law take its course.

Just. Consider, the jewels are found.

Flint. 'Tis not the silly baubles I regard. Are you a man ? are you a father ? and think you I could stoop so low, vile as I stand here, as to make money —filthy money—of the stuff which a daughter's touch has desecrated ? Deep in some pit first I would bury them.

Just. Yet pause a little. Consider. An only child.

Flint. Only, only,—there, it is that stings me, makes me mad. She was the only thing I had to love me—to bear me up against the nipping injuries of the world. I prate when I should act. Bring in your prisoner.

(*The* JUSTICE *makes signs to an Officer, who goes out, and returns with* MISS FLYN.)

Flint. What mockery of my sight is here? This is no daughter.

Off. Daughter, or no daughter, she has confessed to this casket.

Flint (*Handling it*). The very same. Was it in the power of these pale splendors to dazzle the sight of honesty—to put out the regardful eye of piety and daughter-love? Why, a poor glow-worm shews more brightly. Bear witness how I valued them—(*tramples on them.*)—Fair lady, know you aught of my child?

Miss F. I shall here answer no questions.

Just. You must explain how you came by these jewels, madam.

Miss F. (*aside*). Now confidence assist me!——A gentleman in the neighbourhood will answer for me——

Just. His name——

Miss F. Pendulous——

Just. That lives in the next street?

Miss F. The same——now I have him sure.

Just. Let him be sent for. I believe the gentleman to be respectable, and will accept his security.

Flint. Why do I waste my time, where I have no business? None—I have none any more in the world—none.

Enter PENDULOUS.

Pen. What is the meaning of this extraordinary summons?—Maria here?

Flint. Know you anything of my daughter, sir?

Pen. Sir, I neither know her nor yourself, nor why I am brought hither; but for this lady, if you have any thing against her, I will answer it with my life and fortunes.

Just. Make out the bail-bond.

Off. (*Surveying Pendulous*). Please, your worship,

before you take that gentleman's bond, may I have leave to put in a word?

Pen. (*Agitated*). I guess what is coming.

Off. I have seen that gentleman hold up his hand at a criminal bar.

Just. Ha!

Miss F. (*Aside*). Better and better.

Off. My eyes cannot deceive me. His lips quivered about, while he was being tried, just as they do now. His name is not Pendulous.

Miss F. Excellent!

Off. He pleaded to the name of Thomson at York assizes.

Just. Can this be true?

Miss F. I could kiss the fellow!

Off. He was had up for a footpad.

Miss F. A dainty fellow!

Pen. My iniquitous fate pursues me everywhere.

Just. You confess, then.

Pen. I am steeped in infamy.

Miss F. I am as deep in the mire as yourself.

Pen. My reproach can never be washed out.

Miss F. Nor mine.

Pen. I am doomed to everlasting shame.

Miss F. We are both in a predicament.

Just. I am in a maze where all this will end.

Miss F. But here comes one who, if I mistake not, will guide us out of all our difficulties.

Enter MARIAN *and* DAVENPORT.

Mar. (*Kneeling*). My dear father!

Flint. Do I dream?

Mar. I am your Marian.

Just. Wonders thicken!

Flint. The casket—

Miss F. Let me clear up the rest.

Flint. The casket—

Miss F. Was inadvertently in your daughter's hand, when, by an artifice of her maid Lucy,—set on, as she confesses, by this gentleman here,—

Dav. I plead guilty.

Miss F. She was persuaded, that you were in a hurry going to marry her to an object of her dislike; nay, that he was actually in the house for the purpose. The speed of her flight admitted not of her depositing the jewels; but to me, who have been her inseparable companion since she quitted your roof, she intrusted the return of them; which the precipitate measures of this gentleman (*pointing to the Officer*) alone prevented. Mr Cutlet, whom I see coming, can witness this to be true.

Enter CUTLET, *in haste.*

Cut. Aye, poor lamb! poor lamb! I can witness. I have run in such a haste, hearing how affairs stood, that I have left my shambles without a protector. If your worship had seen how she cried (*pointing to Marian,*) and trembled, and insisted upon being brought to her father. Mr Davenport here could not stay her.

Flint. I can forbear no longer. Marian, will you play once again, to please your old father?

Mar. I have a good mind to make you buy me a new grand piano for your naughty suspicions of me.

Dav. What is to become of me?

Flint. I will do more than that. The poor lady shall have her jewels again.

Mar. Shall she?

Flint. Upon reasonable terms, (*smiling.*) And now, I suppose, the court may adjourn.

Dav. Marian!

Flint. I guess what is passing in your mind, Mr Davenport; but you have behaved upon the whole so like a man of honour, that it will give me pleasure,

if you will visit at my house for the future : but (*smiling*) not clandestinely, Marian.

Mar. Hush, father.

Flint. I own I had prejudices against gentry. But I have met with so much candour and kindness among my betters this day—from this gentleman in particular —(*turning to the Justice*)—that I begin to think of leaving off business, and setting up for a gentleman myself.

Just. You have the feelings of one.

Flint. Marian will not object to it.

Just. But (*turning to Miss Flyn*) what motive could induce this lady to take so much disgrace upon herself, when a word's explanation might have relieved her ?

Miss F. This gentleman (*turning to Pendulous*) can explain.

Pen. The devil !

Miss F. This gentleman, I repeat it, whose backwardness in concluding a long and honourable suit from a mistaken delicacy—

Pen. How !

Miss F. Drove me upon the expedient of involving myself in the same disagreeable embarrassments with himself, in the hope that a more perfect sympathy might subsist between us for the future.

Pen. I see it—I see it all.

Just. (*To Pendulous*). You were then tried at York ?

Pen. I was——CAST—

Just. Condemned—

Pen. EXECUTED.

Just. How !

Pen. CUT DOWN and CAME TO LIFE AGAIN. False delicacy, adieu ! The true sort, which this lady has manifested—by an expedient which at first sight might seem a little unpromising, has cured me of the other. We are now on even terms.

Miss F. And may—
Pen. Marry,—I know it was your word.
Miss F. And make a very quiet—
Pen. Exemplary—
Miss F. Agreeing pair of—
Pen. ACQUITTED FELONS.
Flint. And let the prejudiced against our profession acknowledge, that a money-lender may have the heart of a father; and that in the casket, whose loss grieved him so sorely, he valued nothing so dear as (*turning to Marian*) one poor domestic jewel.

EPILOGUE TO "ANTONIO."

"LADIES, ye've seen how Guzman's consort died,
Poor victim of a Spanish brother's pride,
When Spanish honour through the world was blown,
And Spanish beauty for the best was known.[1]
In that romantic, unenlightened time,
A *breach of promise*[2] was a sort of crime—
Which of you handsome English ladies here,
But deem the penance bloody and severe?
A whimsical old Saragossa[3] fashion,
That a dead father's dying inclination
Should *live* to thwart a living daughter's passion[4]
Unjustly on the sex *we*[5] men exclaim,
Rail at *your*[6] vices, and commit the same;—
Man is a promise-breaker from the womb,
And goes a promise-breaker to the tomb—
What need we instance here the lover's vow,
The sick Man's purpose, or the great man's bow?[7]
The truth by few examples best is shown—
Instead of many which are better known,
Take poor Jack Incident, that's dead and gone.
Jack, of dramatic genius justly vain,
Purchased a renter's share at Drury Lane;
A prudent man in every other matter,
Known at his club-room for an honest hatter;
Humane and courteous, led a civil life,
And has been seldom known to beat his wife;

[1] "Four *easy* lines." [2] "For which the *heroine died.*"
[3] In *Spain!!* [4] Two *neat* lines. [5] Or *you.*
[6] Or *our*, as *they* have altered it. [7] Antithesis!!—C. L

But Jack is now grown quite another man,
Frequents the green-room, knows the plot and plan
  Of each new piece,
And has been seen to talk with Sheridan!
In at the play-house just at six he pops,
And never quits it till the curtain drops,
Is never absent on the *author's night*,
Knows actresses and actors too——by sight;
So humble, that with Suett he'll confer,
Or take a pipe with plain Jack Bannister;
Nay, with an author has been known so free,
He once suggested a catastrophe—
In short, John dabbled till his head was turn'd:
His wife remonstrated, his neighbours mourned,
His customers were dropping off apace,
And Jack's affairs began to wear a piteous face.
  One night his wife began a curtain lecture:
'My dearest Johnny, husband, spouse, protector,
Take pity on your helpless babes and me,
Save us from ruin, you from bankruptcy—
Look to your business, leave these cursed plays,
And try again your old industrious ways.'
  Jack, who was always scar'd at the Gazette,
And had some bits of skull uninjured yet,
Promis'd amendment, vow'd his wife spake reason,
'He would not see another play that season.'
  Three stubborn fortnights Jack his promise kept,
Was late and early in his shop, eat, slept,
And walk'd and talk'd, like ordinary men;
No *wit*, but John the hatter once again—
Visits his club: when lo! one *fatal night*
His wife with horror view'd the well-known sight—
John's *hat*, *wig*, *snuff-box*—well she knew his tricks—
And Jack decamping at the hour of six.
Just at the counter's edge a playbill lay,
Announcing that 'Pizarro' was the play—
'O Johnny, Johnny, this is your old doing.'

Quoth Jack, 'Why what the devil storm's a-brewing?
About a harmless play why all this fright?
I'll go and see it, if it's but for spite—
Zounds, woman! Nelson's [1] to be there to night."

1800.

PROLOGUE TO GODWIN'S TRAGEDY OF "FAULKNER."

An author who has given you all delight,
Furnish'd the tale our stage presents to-night.
Some of our earliest tears He taught to steal
Down our young cheeks, and force'd us first to feel.
To solitary shores whole years confin'd,
Who has not read how pensive *Crusoe* pin'd?
Who, now grown old, that did not once admire
His goat, his parrot, his uncouth attire,
The stick, due-notch'd, that told each tedious day
That in the lonely island wore away?
Who has not shudder'd, where he stands aghast
At sight of human footsteps in the waste?
Or joy'd not, when his trembling hands unbind
Thee, *Friday*, gentlest of the savage kind?
The genius who conceiv'd that magic tale
Was skill'd by native pathos to prevail.
His stories, though rough-drawn, and fram'd in haste,
Had that which pleas'd our homely grandsires' taste.
His was a various pen, that freely rov'd
Into all subjects, was in most approv'd.
Whate'er the theme, his ready Muse obey'd——
Love, courtship, politics, religion, trade——
Gifted alike to shine in every sphere,
Nov'list, historian, poet, pamphleteer.
In some blest interval of party-strife,

[1] "A good clap-trap. Nelson has exhibited two or three times at both theatres—and advertised himself."—C. L.

He drew a striking sketch from private life,
Whose moving scenes of intricate distress
We try to-night in a dramatic dress:
A real story of domestic woe,
That asks no aid from music, verse, or show,
But trust to truth, to nature, and *Defoe*.

1807.

EPILOGUE TO HENRY SIDDONS' FARCE, "TIME'S A TELL-TALE."

Bound for the port of matrimonial bliss,
Ere I hoist sail, I hold it not amiss,
(Since prosp'rous ends ask prudent introductions)
To take a slight peep at my written instructions.
There's nothing like determining in time
All questions marital or maritime.

In all seas, straits, gulphs, ports, havens, lands, creeks.
Oh! Here it begins.
"Season, spring, wind standing at point Desire—
"The good ship Matrimony—Commander, Blandford, Esq.

Art. I.

"The captain that has the command of her,
"Or in his absence, the acting officer,
"To see her planks are sound, her timbers tight."—
That acting officer I don't relish quite,
No, as I hope to tack another verse on,
I'll do those duties in my proper person.

Art. II.

"All mutinies to be suppress'd at first."
That's a good caution to prevent the worst.

ART. III.

"That she be properly victual'd, mann'd, and stor'd,
"To see no foreigners are got aboard."
That's rather difficult—do what we can—
A vessel sometimes may mistake her man.
The safest way in such a parlous doubt,
Is steady watch and keep a sharp look out.

ART. IV.

"Whereas their Lords Commissioners (the church)
"Do strictly authorise the right of search:
"As always practis'd—you're to understand
"By these what articles are contraband;
"Guns, mortars, pistols, halberts, swords, pikes, lances,
"Ball, powder, shot, and the appurtenances.
"Videlicet—whatever can be sent
"To give the enemy encouragement.
"Ogles are small shot (so the instruction runs),
"Touches hand grenades, and squeezes rifle guns."
"That no free-bottom'd neutral waiting maid
"Presume to exercise the carrying trade:
"The prohibition here contained extends
"To all commerce cover'd by the name of Friends."
"Heaven speed the good ship well"—and so it ends.
Oh with such wholesome jealousies as these
May Albion cherish his old spouse the seas,
Keep over her a husband's firm command,
Not with too rigid nor too lax a hand.
Be gently patient to her swells and throws
When big with safeties to himself she goes;
Nor while she clips him in a fast embrace,
Stand for some female frowns upon her face,
But tell the rival world—and tell in Thunder,
Whom Nature joined, none ere shall put asunder.

1807.

PROLOGUE TO COLERIDGE'S TRAGEDY, "REMORSE."

Spoken by Mr Carr.

There are, I am told, who sharply criticise
Our modern theatres unwieldy size.
We players shall scarce plead guilty to that charge,
Who think a house can never be too large:
Griev'd when a rant, that's worth a nation's ear,
Shakes some prescrib'd Lyceum's petty sphere;
And pleased to mark the grin from space to space
Spread epidemic o'er a town's broad face.—
O might old Betterton or Booth return
To view our structures from their silent urn,
Could Quin come stalking from Elysian glades,
Or Garrick get a day-rule from the shades—
Where now, perhaps, in mirth which Spirits approve,
He imitates the ways of men above,
And apes the actions of our upper coast,
As in his days of flesh he play'd the ghost:—
How might they bless our ampler scope to please,
And hate their own old shrunk up audiences—
Their houses yet were palaces to those,
Which Ben and Fletcher for their triumphs chose.
Shakspeare, who wish'd a kingdom for a stage,
Like giant pent in disproportion'd cage,
Mourn'd his contracted strengths and crippled rage.
He who could tame his vast ambition down
To please some scatter'd gleanings of a town,
And, if some hundred auditors supplied
Their meagre meed of claps, was satisfied,
How had he felt, when that dread curse of Lear's
Had burst tremendous on a thousand ears,
While deep-struck wonder from applauding bands
Return'd the tribute of as many hands!

Rude were his guests; he never made his bow
To such an audience as salutes us now.
He lack'd the balm of labor, female praise.
Few Ladies in his time frequented plays,
Or came to see a youth with awkward art
And shrill sharp pipe burlesque the woman's part.
The very use, since so essential grown,
Of painted scenes, was to his stage unknown.
The air-blest castle, round whose wholesome crest,
The martlet, guest of summer, chose her nest—
The forest walks of Arden's fair domain,
Where Jaques fed his solitary vein.
No pencil's aid as yet had dared supply,
Seen only by the intellectual eye.
Those scenic helps, denied to Shakspeare's page,
Our Author owes to a more liberal age.
Nor pomp nor circumstance are wanting here;
'Tis for himself alone that he must fear.
Yet shall remembrance cherish the just pride,
That (be the laurel granted or denied)
He first essay'd in this distinguish'd fane,
Severer muses and a tragic strain.

1813.

EPILOGUE TO JAMES KENNEY'S FARCE, "DEBTOR AND CREDITOR."

Spoken by MR LISTON *and* MR EMERY *in character.*

Gosling. False world—
Sampson. You're bit, sir.
Gosling. Boor, what's that to you?
With Love's soft sorrows what hast thou to do?
'Tis *here* for consolation I must look.
[*Takes out his pocket book.*
Sampson. Nay sir, don't put us down in your black book.

Gosling. All Helicon is here.
Sampson. All Hell.
Gosling. You clod!
Did'st never hear of the Pierian God,
And the Nine Virgins on the sacred Hill?
Sampson. Nine Virgins!—Sure!
Gosling. I have them all at will.
Sampson. If Miss fight shy, then—
Gosling. And my suit decline,
Sampson. You'll make a dash at them.
Gosling. I'll tip all nine.
Sampson. What, wed 'em, sir?
Gosling. O, no—that thought I banish.
I woo—not wed; they never bring the Spanish.
Their favours I pursue, and court the bays.
Sampson. Mayhap, you're one of them that write the plays.
Gosling. Bumpkin!
Sampson. I'm told the public 's well nigh crammed
With such like stuff.
Gosling. The public may be damned.
Sampson. They ha'nt damned you? (*inquisitively*).
Gosling. This fellow 's wond'rous shrewd!
I'd tell him if I thought he'd not be rude.
Once in my greener years, I wrote a piece.
Sampson. Aye, so did I,—at school like—
Gosling. Booby, cease!
I mean a Play.
Sampson. Oh!
Gosling. And to crown my joys,
'Twas acted—
Sampson. Well, and how—
Gosling. It made a noise.
A kind of mingled—(*as if musing*).
Sampson. Aye, describe it, try.
Gosling. Like—Were you ever in the pillory?
Sampson. No, sir, I thank ye, no such kind of game.

Gosling. Bate but the eggs, and it was much the same.
Shouts, clamours, laugh, and a peculiar sound,
Like, like—
Sampson. Like geese, I warrant, in a pound.
I like this mainly!
Gosling. Some began to cough,
Some cried—
Sampson. Go on—
Gosling. A few—and some—"Go off!"
I can't suppress it, Gods! I hear it now!
It was in fact a most confounded row.
Dire was the din, as when some storm confounds
Earth, sea, and sky, with all terrific sounds.
Not hungry lions send forth notes more strange,
Not bulls and bears, that have been hoaxed on Change.
Sampson. Exeter Change you mean—I've seen they bears.
Gosling. The beasts I mean are far less tame than theirs,
Change Alley Bruins, nattier though their dress,
Might at Polito's study politesse.
Brief let me be. My gentle Sampson, pray,
Fight Larry Whack, but never write a play.
Sampson. I won't, Sir—and these christian souls petition,
To spare all wretched folks in such condition.

1814.

PROLOGUE TO SHERIDAN KNOWLES' COMEDY, "THE WIFE."

UNTOWARD fate no luckless wight invades
More sorely than the Man who drives *two trades;*
Like Esop's bat, between two natures placed,
Scowl'd at by *mice*, among the *birds* disgraced.
Our author thus, of two-fold fame exactor,
Is doubly scouted,—both as Bard, and Actor!
Wanting in haste a Prologue, he applied
To three poetic friends; was thrice denied.
Each glared on him with supercilious glance,
As on a Poor Relation met by chance;
And one was heard, with more repulsive air,
To mutter "Vagabond," "Rogue," "Strolling Player!"
A poet once, he found—and look'd aghast—
By turning actor, he had lost his *caste.*
The verse patch'd up at length—with like ill fortune
His friends behind the scenes he did importune
To speak his lines. He found them all fight shy,
Nodding their heads in cool civility.
"Their service in the Drama was enough,
The poet might recite the poet's stuff!"
The rogues—they like him hugely—but it stung 'em,
Somehow—to think a Bard had got among 'em.
Their mind made up—no earthly pleading shook it,
In pure compassion 'till I undertook it.
Disown'd by Poets, and by Actors too,
Dear Patrons of both arts, he turns to you!
If in your hearts some tender feelings dwell
From sweet Virginia, or heroic Tell:
If in the scenes which follow you can trace
What once has pleased you—an unbidden grace—

A touch of nature's work—an awkward start
Or ebullition of an Irish heart—
Cry, clap, commend it! if you like them not,
Your former favours cannot be forgot.
Condemn them—damn them—hiss them, if you will—
Their author is your grateful servant still.

1833.

EPILOGUE TO "THE WIFE."

Spoken by Miss Ellen Tree.

When first our Bard his simple will express'd,
That I should in his Heroine's robes be dress'd,
My fears were with my vanity at strife,
How I could act that untried part—a "Wife."
But Fancy to the Grison hills me drew,
Where Mariana like a wild flower grew,
Nursing her garden kindred: so far I
Liked her condition, willing to comply
With that sweet single life: when, with a cranch,
Down came that thundering, crashing, avalanche,
Startling my mountain-project! "Take this spade,"
Said Fancy then; "dig low, adventurous Maid,
For hidden wealth." I did; and, Ladies, lo!
Was e'er romantic female's fortune so,
To dig a life-warm Lover from the—snow?

A Wife and Princess see me next, beset
With subtle toils, in an Italian net;
While knavish Courtiers, stung with rage or fear,
Distill'd lip-poison in a husband's ear.
I ponder'd on the boiling Southern vein;
Racks, cords, stilettos, rush'd upon my brain!
By poor, good, weak Antonio, too disowned—
I dream'd each night, I should be Desdemona'd:

EPILOGUE TO "THE WIFE"

And, being in Mantua, thought upon the shop,
Whence fair Verona's youth his breath did stop:
And what if Leonardo, in foul scorn,
Some lean Apothecary should suborn
To take my hated life? A "tortoise" hung
Before my eyes, and in my ears scaled "alligators"
rung.
But *my* Othello, to his vows more zealous—
Twenty Iagos could not make *him* jealous!

New raised to reputation, and to life—
At your commands behold me, without strife,
Well-pleased, and ready to repeat—the "Wife."

1833

NOTES TO
"POEMS AND PLAYS"

NOTES TO
"POEMS AND PLAYS"

Rosamund Gray (p. 1)

Written in 1798, when Lamb was emerging slowly from the gloom of his immediate past and had just resumed those literary preoccupations, if not those literary ambitions, which had been so tragically broken off in September 1796, *Rosamund Gray* is charged, above almost every other work of his, with biographical, psychological, and literary interest. It affords the material for an extended study from all these points of view: a study for which, however, this is not the occasion, or at least not the opportunity. Therefore beyond advising the faithful student of Lamb to return as often as possible to *Rosamund Gray*—from reading his Poems, from reading his Essays, from reading his Letters, and from reading whatever that is worth reading has been written about him—I shall only say a couple of words about one question that has been raised in connection with this strange little work. How far, it has been asked, had it a foundation in fact? And something that has the look of being a sort of affirmative reply has been given. We are told that there was a Rosamund Gray, and that she lived near Widford in very truth, and that, more by token, her cottage is there to testify even unto this day; also, that she was that visionary first love of Charles Lamb, the Anna of the Poems, the Alice W——n of the Essays, and that her name was Ann Simmons, and she married a pawnbroker. Not to say that there is anything incongruous in this, there certainly seems to be a superfluity of circumstance. The evidence proves too much and too little. The "original" of Rosamund Gray should have been some young girl living under circumstances like those described in the story, one whose life should have been blighted by the same cruel violence and wrong that befell Lamb's heroine. Lamb says nothing to countenance the notion that he ever knew of such an one; and indeed avers that he was set upon writing the tale by nothing more than the suggestion started in his mind by an old ballad about

> "An old woman clothed in gray
> Whose daughter was charming and young."

There was no tragic Rosamund Gray, then, at Widford. But as Lamb has invested his heroine with the qualities, and adorned

her with the particular kind of good looks, which made up his ideal of sweet and beautiful maidenhood at that time, there is an inevitable approximation of the idea he has of Rosamund to the idea he had of Alice or Anna, when he wrote those early sonnets which enshrine for us the vision of his young romance just as it is vanishing out of his life. Now it is possible that the Anna of reality lived near Widford, and it is certain that the Rosamund of the tale lives there till this day; and it would have been a miracle, without precedent in the annals of the mythopoietic mind of uncorrupted man, if the simple villagers had continued to think that the distinction between these two was worth perpetuating. So the house in which Anna lived becomes Rosamund Gray's house—for them: and for others it becomes a proof that Anna did live there. These would argue, with great show of rationality, that the house was, of course, in the first instance Anna's house, and then, by the transmuting power (the esemplastic power, by the way, we ought particularly to call it here) of the popular imagination, it became Rosamund's house. I am inclined to think, however, that the process may have been exactly the reverse of this—that this house was built from the top, as houses are said to be in a distant part of our wonderful world, and that having been erected to Rosamund it was let down, so to say, to Anna. What was there, pray, about Ann Simmons, supposing that Ann Simmons was ever anybody or lived there at all, to make people remember, for even a lustrum of years, what house she dwelt in? According to the accounts, she was a sensible young woman and married a pawnbroker. But even in the neighbourhood of Widford people are not so rural that they suppose that marrying a pawnbroker is marrying the Lord Mayor of London, and riding off in a coach to fairyland; and therefore they would hardly gaze with reflective admiration upon the house she had lived in, the very day she left it. And if they did not do it then, at once, they could not do it at all; for a legendary memory can no more begin to-morrow than a tree can strike root in the air, just an inch above the earth. On the other hand, stories with a romantic interest of a tragic and appealing character have a wonderful way of building houses, and planting ancient oak-trees, and depositing rocks, or carving out caves, all the world over: but the style of architecture which they most affect is a humble cottage home. Nay, I will go so far as to say that there are few things from which the mythical character of any individual can be so safely inferred as from the present-day existence of the house in which he was born. This is so universally true that I begin to have doubts about Burns; and I do feel that Stratford-on-Avon affords a strong argument—perhaps the only very strong argument—in favour of the Baconian hypothesis. Be very sure, that house isn't there for nothing. And as to Widford: that village would not long remain ignorant that it had been chosen for the scene of a beautiful and haunting romance

which was by no means unremarked nor unread upon its first appearance—to say nothing of the fact that Widford knew the author personally, and had probably received more than one presentation copy embellished with his autograph. A knowledge of the outline of the tale would soon pass to the wider circle of those who had never read it for themselves, but who would on that very account be all the more apt to admire and believe, to wonder and make much of its every circumstance. For did it not concern their very selves? Was it not in print, Widford's own paragraph in Universal History? It would have been very strange indeed had the Amphionic virtues that belong to hearsay, repetition, and rehearsal not produced their due effect in this instance also, and had the house in which Rosamund lived not risen from the ground like an exhalation! No doubt the site upon which it was to appear—a preliminary point of much difficulty in all important building projects, especially those which have a civic, official, and representative character—would be *more quickly* settled if it happened that there *had* lived in that neighbourhood a maiden (call her, if you like, Ann Simmons) with whom the author had, to the knowledge of the inhabitants, been apt on all possible occasions to go wandering "in winding wood-walks green, Green winding walks and shady pathways sweet." But certainly the event—the inevitable architectural upshot of the whole matter—did not depend upon that preceding condition; and the question as to whether Anna or Alice lived in that part of England or no, and what was her real name, must be decided, if decided it ever is, upon other evidence than that which consists merely in the explanatory commentary wherewith the Widford imagination has embroidered a romance in which it felt a strong and, as one might say, a personal and collective interest. After all, what is really known, in regard to *Rosamund Gray*, is only this: (1) That Lamb placed the action of his first story in the scene which had taken most hold upon his mind in childhood, as every other romance-writer has done from the beginning of the world; (2) that his description of Rosamund is a sort of memorial portrait of the damsel who had awaked the sleeping fervours in the heart of his gentle boyhood, and whom he had loved so long and lost so recently. But how could it have been otherwise? How could he draw an ideal maiden and not borrow some hints from the perfections that he had so lately knelt to? Nothing in all this, however, goes to associate Anna or Alice necessarily with Widford; and we ought to keep an open mind for any indications that may point elsewhere.

The story was published by Lee and Hurst in 1798 under the title: "*A Tale of Rosamund Gray and Old Blind Margaret.* By Charles Lamb." When it was placed among his "Works" in 1818, the title was shortened, and the dedication of the original volume was now omitted. It had ran thus: "This Tale is Inscribed in Friendship to Marmaduke Thompson, of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge."

Thompson had been a schoolfellow at Christ's Hospital and is referred to in the article on that school in *Essays of Elia*. The little book had a fair success, and brought in some guineas. Of the praise that its strangely immature beauty and unfinished perfections have won for it, noblest and most generous has been that of Shelley: "With the parcel came Lamb's Works. I have looked at none of the other books yet. What a lovely thing is his *Rosamund Gray!* How much knowledge of the sweetest and deepest part of our nature is in it! When I think of such a mind as Lamb's—when I see how unnoticed remain things of such exquisite and complete perfection—what should I hope for myself, if I had not higher objects in view than fame?" This in 1819. One does not wonder, therefore, to find Lamb writing in 1829: "I thought *Rosamuna Gray* a pretty modest thing. Hessey [his publisher] tells me that the world would not bear it now. I have lived to grow into an indecent character." Prophetic words. Nevertheless I find "*Rosamund Gray*, etc. By Charles Lamb," advertised, at the end of a small copy of *Paradise Lost* (1836) which I have, as being one of the earlier volumes of a series (Tilt's Miniature Classical Library) which contains such unimpeachable works as *Elizabeth; or, the Exiles of Siberia; Paul and Virginia; Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia*, and *Mrs. Chapone's Letters on the Improvement of the Mind*. So that in the latter days, it would seem, there had been redemption; or there had been found in Paternoster Row a man greatly daring, and worthy of the knightly associations of his name. Of course the tale was republished by Moxon a year or two earlier; but only in Lamb's Works, and therefore not in such respectable company.

To Mrs Siddons (p. 55)

In the Dedication of his Poems to Coleridge (see *ante*, p. 51) Lamb has acknowledged that he and Lloyd "came into our first battle under cover of the greater Ajax." This sonnet, the earliest-printed thing of his that we know of, is a curiously complete instance of that—for in it we cannot well distinguish Ajax from the lesser poet or the more shrinking warrior whom he covers. The thing first appeared in the "Morning Chronicle" (Dec. 29, 1794), as one of a series of sonnets, all signed S.T.C. Enthusiastic references to this series are found in the early letters, but in them Lamb refers to this Siddons sonnet as a work of his own, and indicates that Coleridge had worked over it—and was welcome to. The influence of his hand in it is easily traced, especially in lines 6–9, inclusive. But it appeared as Lamb's in "Poems, on Various Subjects: by S. T. Coleridge" (1796), and again in "Poems by S. T. Coleridge. Second Edition. To which are now added Poems by Charles Lamb and Charles Lloyd," 1797. Its next appearance, however, was in Coleridge's Poems, third edition (1803), where it took its place as a work of S. T. C.'s, without any

qualification whatever. Perhaps the powerful infiltration of a foreign excellence which the thing had received had had the effect of rather neutralising in Lamb those feelings of partiality with which poets and parents are known to regard their own productions. Certain it is that he let Coleridge have it and keep it, and did not reprint it among his own poems in 1818. For a reference to Lamb's first acquaintance with Mrs Siddons' acting, see conclusion of Essay, *My First Play* (vol. i. of this Edition, p. 200).

"O! I COULD LAUGH" (p. 55)

The influence of Coleridge may be traced here also; and, through Coleridge, that which Lamb called "German sublimity"—the wild and dithyrambic exaltation of, say, Coleridge's own sonnet on Schiller. There is a curious anticipation of Keats in the last lines. For the (probable) occasion, see *The Old Margate Hoy* (vol. ii. p. 53).

"METHINKS HOW DAINTY SWEET" (p. 56)

Interesting as being amongst the little cycle of poems referring to his young love-dream, the only one which appears to have been written before the awakening, or the loss of that vision.

"A TIMID GRACE SITS TREMBLING" (p. 56)

Written after the awakening. The description here is paraphrased in the opening lines of the third chapter of "Rosamund Gray" (see p. 9 of this volume). Also there is a curious anticipation of both the thought and feeling of "She walks in beauty;" especially of these lines in Byron's poem—

> "Where thoughts serenely sweet express
> How pure, how dear their dwelling-place."

Of those three sonnets, the first and second appeared in the 1796 book, as did also "Was it some sweet device?" The third appeared in the 1797 book.

"WE WERE TWO PRETTY BABES" (p. 57)

This, a very characteristic production of Lamb's young-and-wistful time, seems not to have been quite acceptable to Coleridge, whose own more dynamic genius, and more cosmic assurance and projectivity, had enabled him to overleap some stages of development through which Lamb passed. He was a good man all his life, in the essential sense of the words (albeit he may have lacked some of the providential gifts and virtues and veracities of a forward-looking and steady pork-butcher)—yet he had probably quite forgotten the time when he was as unsophisticated as the youth who here so innocently laments his own divorce from Innocence.—See *Vision of Repentance*, and Note thereon.

"The Lord of Life shakes off" (p. 57)

("Monthly Magazine," October 1797)

Composed, he tells Coleridge, "during a walk down to Hertfordshire early in last summer" (*i.e.* 1795), this sonnet appears to me to tell strongly against the notion that Lamb's Anna or Alice was a village maiden living near Widford. Here he describes his feelings as he starts out, at early morn, to walk down into the country, as he had done many a summer before. He passes out of town proper (the City, as he here calls it) and comes into the northern outskirts of London—in, or just beyond, Islington—and now mark these words:

> I pass not thee so lightly, well-known spire,
> That minded me of many a pleasure gone,
> *Of merrier days, of love and Islington;*
> *Kindling afresh the flames of past desire.*
> And I shall muse on thee, slow journeying on
> To the green plains of pleasant Hertfordshire.

What were these merrier days "of love and Islington," if Islington was not the scene of his love? Neither he nor his family had ever lived in Islington at that time, so that the words cannot merely mean "in the days when we lived in Islington, and I was happy in my love." Nor can we put this evidence out of court by conveniently assuming that the matter referred to was "another story"—an earlier love than that in which his heart and brain were engaged so deeply and disastrously. "A boy's love is a long love," and there is everything to show that this was one of the longest. Letters and Poems are equally explicit as to that; and in the Essay on *New Year's Eve* he speaks of having "pined away seven of my goldenest years, when I was thrall to the fair hair, and fairer eyes, of Alice W——n." Fully a year after the writing of this sonnet, and therefore when the "merrier days" of love and of Islington were gone further into the past, he refers again to that favoured scene, in discussing the possibilities of a rather vague house-hunting commission he had received from Coleridge: "Islington, possibly, you would not like; to me 'tis classical ground." Why? Was it all for love of the Bailiff's Daughter of that place—and not, rather, of some more modern maiden who had lived there? And if it be true that Anna or Alice married a Mr Bartram, a silversmith and pawnbroker of Princes Street, Leicester Square, that gentleman would not, according to this supposition, have had to go so far from business on his courting days. It is at least more probable that an Islingtonian maiden should have had two lovers, both living in London, than that this particular felicity should have fallen to the lot of a girl in a Hertfordshire village.

There are two pieces of internal evidence that appear to tell against the Islington theory. First, there is the passage in the

Essay *Blakesmoor in H——shire*, where he speaks (vol. ii. of this Edition, p. 10) of the picture of a Lady—"with the bright yellow H——shire hair, and eye of watchet hue—so like my Alice!" But that touch is so pretty, so unexpected, and so inevitable—has such absolute and sufficient good literary reason for being there—that I do not think it need count for much as an indication of mere fact. Secondly, the sonnet which here follows (No. VII.) speaks of rural and sylvan scenery, of

> Winding wood-walks green,
> Green winding walks, and shady pathways sweet—

and the conclusion has been drawn that this points to Widford and its neighbourhood. A very natural conclusion, but it is not so inevitable that all others are excluded. In the northern outskirts of London, over an expansive region that is now a howling wilderness of bricks and 'buses, there was to be found at the end of the eighteenth century a variegated, richly wooded country comparable for sylvan beauty and charm to any area in England or the world. Thackeray speaks of this in "Vanity Fair"; prints representing London's encircling Arcadias may be seen in such accessible books as "Old and New London"; and the last traces and indications of the ruined paradise are not even yet quite gone. Certainly at the back of Islington, which was in Lamb's later days still so suburban as to be almost rural, there was a fairyland (to which you may, now that the fairies have been expelled, travel all the way for twopence, from the very heart of town, starting from the Bank or from Hampstead Road) well enough supplied with "Green winding walks and shady pathways sweet" to have met the needs of any lover and his trysting maid. Thirdly, however, Lamb says that this sonnet was written "within a day or two of the last, on revisiting the spot where the scene was laid of my first sonnet that 'mocked my step with many a lovely glade.'" But "within a day or two" does not necessarily mean within a day or two after. The arrangement in the present volume seems to give it that meaning, and the sonnet appears to be a sequel to the preceding one, continuing the journey and the theme. But Lamb apparently did not wish to give that impression, for in his "Works" (1818) these early and personal sonnets were given in this order: (1) "Was it some sweet device?" (2) "Methinks how dainty sweet it were." (3) "When last I roved." (4) "A timid grace." (5) "If from my lips." The sonnet which we are now concerned with ("The Lord of Life") did not appear in the collection at all, nor was it ever reissued by Lamb. Its omission, when we consider its poetical excellence, is not a little remarkable; but is more easily understood if we suppose that Anna had belonged to Islington and was now (in 1818) still alive, the mother of children who called Bartram father. In that case the

reference to Islington in this sonnet would have been too precise an identification; it would have been, for many people, "as good as naming her"—whereas the series, with this determinant eliminated, is rendered somewhat void for the purposes of that kind of human interest which is called gossip.

The case is not proved, nor do I wish to force the argument; but I think the question must at least be considered open, pending the production of better evidence than has been produced thus far in support of the orthodox or "authorised" view. I will only add that as that view requires a complete ignoring of this sonnet, this sonnet has been completely ignored.

"If from my lips some angry accents" (p. 59)

In whatever part of England those "Green winding walks and shady pathways sweet" may have lain, the goal they led to was madness. In the first of his letters that has been preserved (the letter to Coleridge, dated May 27, 1796) he says: "The six weeks that finished last year and began this, your very humble servant spent very agreeably in a madhouse, at Hoxton. . . Coleridge, it may convince you of my regards for you when I tell you my head ran on you in my madness, as much almost as on another person, who I am inclined to think was the more immediate cause of my temporary frenzy. The Sonnet I send you has small merit as poetry; but you will be curious to read it when I tell you it was written in my prison-house in one of my lucid intervals." It would be an impiety to make any comment upon this beautiful-hearted utterance, but the reader may be asked to note that Lamb not only sent it to Coleridge, but printed it in the book of 1797 and again in his "Works" in 1818—being more concerned that the world should know what he thought of this dear sister, than that it should *not* know that he himself had been an inmate of a madhouse.

The Grandame (p. 59)

This was Lamb's maternal grandmother, born Mary Bruton, who married a Field. References to her as housekeeper at Blakesware have been made in the Notes to vols. i. and ii. Up till the time of her death in 1792, Charles Lamb had yearly spent his holidays with her. In sending this poem to Coleridge in June, 1796, he says: "My grandmother . . . was a woman of exemplary piety and goodness—and for many years before her death was terribly afflicted with a cancer in her breast, which she bore with true Christian patience." Coleridge having shown the lines to Lloyd, who did not at this time know Lamb, Lloyd craved to be allowed to print them in the volume of verse which he was preparing to consecrate to the same family pieties. Permission having been given (by Coleridge if not by Lamb), they duly appeared in "Poems on the Death of Priscilla Farmer. By

her Grandson, Charles Lloyd, 1796." They reappeared in the 1797 book and again in the "Works." Lloyd was a well-to-do young man, the son of a banker, so that he or his family could pay for having the book handsomely produced: whence Charles Lamb's remark—"I cannot but smile to see my Granny so gaily decked forth!"

The three poems that follow also appeared both in the 1797 book and the "Works."

Lines addressed to Sara and S. T. C. (p. 62)

Sent in a letter (July 5, 1796) to Coleridge, who had invited Lamb to pay him and Sara a visit. And Lamb was eager to go; but some higher power in the India House—"that execrable aristocrat and knave, Richardson," exclaims Lamb, using the foulest terms in the vocabulary of a younger revolutionist—absolutely forbade him to leave at that time. Hence these tears. The lines were printed in the "Monthly Magazine" for January 1797, with Lamb's signature in full; but they were not by Coleridge admitted into the Book, nor were they ever reprinted by Lamb. In the first version (sent in his letter) he made some wild shots, such as mixing the waters of the Warwickshire Avon and the Clifton Avon—showing that he had begun at a very early time to make a conscience of knowing no geography. Unfortunately, these excellent features were afterwards eliminated, and I have had no choice but to follow the printed text.

To the Poet Cowper (p. 63)

The phrase "written some time back" has reference to the date of publication in the "Monthly Magazine," given at the foot. As a fact, the verses had been sent to Coleridge on July 5 of that year: with a half-apology for rating Cowper so highly, which he can only have half meant. From that "indisposition," however, poor Cowper never recovered, though he lived, and worked, through years of blank religious despair.

A Vision of Repentance (p. 64)

This poem deals dramatically with the subject which is more elegiacally treated in the fifth sonnet ("We were two pretty babes")—namely, that sense of desecration, that feeling of having sounded the depths of unholiness, which comes upon the more sensitive, loving, and idealising natures after they have made the first surrenders, even in thought, to the facts—that is to say, to the cynicism—of life: have learned to deem, say, of women for a moment with less blinding reverence, or of men with less of wistful regard and less faith in their general nobility of soul. To such natures, all clarifications of the intelligence, all increase of moral comprehension, every fresh integration of character in the process of growth, every new initiation (in

Balzac's phrase) which means a re-making of the mind into a more complex crystal reflecting a more varied universe—every sloughing of the vague prepossessions of youthful ignorance and unworldly sentiment—all that means gathering sense and knowledge, and becoming fit to live upon this earth, and especially in this England—will seem for the time being merely a disintegration of the moral being, a descent to Avernus, the contracting of a league with the Devil: that sinister, intellectual, and gibing Spirit! They will have this penitential feeling about the matter, this sense of sin, this tragic consciousness of the ruined angel and the lost soul, simply because each of these stages is marked by a discharge of that imaginative element and that idealism which was the vital constituent—the oxygen in the atmosphere—of their minds hitherto. The nature of what is taking place eludes them. They are aware of something lost, and never of something gathered —of a lowered potential—of virtue, as it were, gone out of them; and they feel themselves to be made poor and bad. If they write sonnets, these sonnets will convey their sense of the devastation of the moral scene. And editors who were never that kind of young man themselves in any slightest degree, and who therefore know nothing about it, will come along, and will shake their heads, little suspecting that, when all is said, the youth who writes the said sonnets—the youth with the desecrated consciousness and the Satanic soul—will have to get rid of charge upon charge of idealism yet, and to drop through the lower half of the total distance from here to the zenith, before he stands upon the ground of the common righteous or breathes the air of the everyday blameless of this world! So much seems worth saying, since there has been some quite superfluous head-shaking expended upon this *Vision of Repentance* and certain other utterances in the same vein: but an adequate discussion of the topic would require a volume in folio, for which there is at present no public demand. The poem appeared in the Appendix to the Coleridge-Lamb-Lloyd book (1797), but was not republished by Lamb. Probably because he recognised betimes that mankind are "mostly fools."

To Mary Lamb (p. 67)

This sonnet forms a pathetic pendant to the one on p. 59—"If from my lips some angry accents fell." *That* expressed his gratitude for Mary's loving care of him, and her patience, and her loyalty to him while his mind was in eclipse, and while he may have needed, perhaps, some championing as well as some care. But in the short interval a similar gloom, with more tragic circumstances and effects, had fallen upon Mary; and it was she who needed the care and the championing now. Her mind was completely restored many weeks before the end of 1796, but she was still in the madhouse, and questions as to her future—legal questions, family questions—still unsettled. He was valiantly

fighting to secure her liberation, almost alone; and omitted no opportunity of testifying how unshaken was *his* faith in her essential sanity (that awful visitation being passed) and her abiding worth. Mainly to this end he took up again the few leaves of verse that he had cast from him as vanities, and now put them in a state to appear in the 1797 book—the Second Edition of Coleridge's Poems—with *this* in lieu of all other Preface.

THE DEDICATION

THE FEW FOLLOWING POEMS,

CREATURES OF THE FANCY AND THE FEELING

IN LIFE'S MORE *VACANT* HOURS

PRODUCED, FOR THE MOST PART, BY

LOVE IN IDLENESS

ARE,

WITH ALL A BROTHER'S FONDNESS,

INSCRIBED TO

MARY ANN LAMB

THE AUTHOR'S BEST FRIEND AND SISTER.

A little later (on January 2, 1797) he forwarded the present sonnet to Coleridge, with this apology for some not very important lack of strength in some part of it. "If the fraternal sentiment conveyed in the following lines will atone for the total want of anything like merit or genius in it, I desire you will print it next after my other sonnet to my Sister." On January 10 he writes, obviously in reply to criticisms received: "I am aware of the unpoetical cast of the last six lines of my last sonnet, and think myself unwarranted in smuggling so tame a thing into the book; only, the sentiments of those six lines are thoroughly congenial to me in my state of mind, and I wish to accumulate perpetuating tokens of my affection to poor Mary." Unfortunately, they were not congenial to Coleridge, who was a young man at the time, a little absolute in his notions of what literary excellence consisted in, and—under the influence, I suppose, of Schiller, and what he himself called the "material sublime"—a little prone to what was at its best dithyrambic exaltation, and at its worst Cambyses' vein, a tyrant's vein. The sonnet is indeed very beautifully felt and finely said, for all that, and *malgré* some want of momentum in the close. It has, in its degree, that strength of seemingly loose and casual structure which marks the sonnets of Milton—from whom, indeed, more than from any one else, it seems to me, Lamb's early poetry received an enriching and ennobling tincture. The lines appeared in the "Monthly Magazine" for October 1797, but were not reprinted by Lamb.

The Tomb of Douglas (p. 68)

It is as well to have this thing, if only as a token of versatility. It is a token, of course, of something more: namely, that Lamb had very recently been at the stage of—shall we call it?—literary culture which permitted Home's "Douglas" to be an impressive and haunting work. The mention of Fingal reminds us that Ossian was probably one of the better voices speaking to Charles Lamb about the period when the correspondence begins. Nevertheless the bringing of Fingal (verse 5) and Douglas together, even by an allusion within the limits of a short poem, was a fearful enterprise of the well-meaning, but unfortunately Southron, mind of our young Poet! I suppose he thought they had some degree of nationality in common: not recognising, what no Englishman ever recognises, that there were two nations inhabiting the geographical expression called Scotland—one of these nations being, of course, much superior to the other, and further off from England. In sending the poem to Coleridge (December 1796) he says: "I would also wish to retain the following, if only to perpetuate the memory of so exquisite a pleasure as I have often received in the performance of the tragedy of 'Douglas,' when Mrs Siddons has been the Lady Randolph." This is worth noting: for Lamb saw a good deal of his literature through the atmosphere of the playhouse and across the footlights; and so always visualised the action as taking place upon the stage of Drury Lane, and not in the wider amphitheatre of earth and sky. These verses appeared in the 1797 book, but were not reprinted by Lamb.

To Charles Lloyd, "An Unexpected Visitor" (p. 70)

In a passage in the Memoir (vol. ii. pp. xliii–xliv) I have given some account of the material loneliness and the moral isolation in which Lamb was living at the end of 1796: with only his father, an imbecile, at home, and Aunt Hetty, returned upon his hands to die; Mary in a madhouse; no friends at the office or elsewhere to whom he could open his heart; no correspondent, even in the wider world, except Coleridge; and fain to read Priestley on Philosophical Necessity with feelings of gratitude, because even that dry matter afforded his avid young mind some encouragement to exercise and unfold itself, and enabled him to enjoy "a kind of communion, a kind of friendship, even, with the great and the good." Almost immediately after the despatch of the letter in which he speaks of these things, there came to his door, early in January, the "Unexpected Visitor," Coleridge's young friend and pupil, Charles Lloyd. "The emotions that I felt on his coming, so unlooked for," says Lamb, a few days later, "are not ill expressed in what

follows, and what (if you do not object to them as too personal, and to the world obscure, or otherwise wanting in worth) I should wish to make a part of our little volume." To the friendship immediately formed between the two, reference has been made in former Notes. One consequence of it, that claims to be noted just here, was the publication of a volume entitled "Blank Verse: by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb. 1798"; to which Lamb contributed seven pieces. The present poem was published in the 1797 book and again in the Works. It is, if carefully read and considered, perhaps the most pathetic thing—for us, who see the whole line of his life, before and after, and especially what he was just then—the most pathetic thing that he ever wrote. How dire must have been the need, when the gratitude for little was so great!

Written on the Day of My Aunt's Funeral (p. 72)

The words omitted in the first line are, of course, "Aunt Hetty." Reference has been made to her in the Memoir prefixed to vol. ii., in the Notes to *My Relations* (vol. i. p. 305), and in the Introduction to "Stories for Children" (vol. vii. of this Edition). She had lived with Lamb's parents for apparently thirty years, not in complete mutual understanding during the earlier part of that time, until the children grew up and taught the older members of the household to read one another better and love one another more. To Charles Lamb, especially, Aunt Hetty was "the cherisher of infancy." Letters and Essays alike afford us glimpses of Aunt Hetty taking the way of cherishing which her heart dictated, and which was likely to be well-approved by the beneficiary: we read of special cakes bought to comfort his young heart, when holidays were over and he must return to school: or we see "the good old relative (in whom love forbade pride)"—and who sought to avert imminent starvation, or at least to increase happiness, by bringing to the young scholar, even within the school precincts, some extra sustenance or some special dainty from the family-fare of the day—we see her "squatting down upon some odd stone in a by-nook of the cloisters, disclosing the viands (of higher regale than those cates which the ravens ministered to the Tishbite)." . . . What wonder if, at the end of days, and after a very brief venture into the unkindly world, in the house of "a wealthy relative of my father," the lonely and silent, but affectionate old woman came back to die where she would be sure of having her cherished nephew by her bedside? She came, because the "wealthy relative" wanted to be rid of her: but assuredly she herself wanted to come. The reference to his father is to be compared with the description of him in *The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple* (under the name of Lovel), and also in the rhyming letter to Dibdin, July 14, 1826. This, and the succeeding poem, appeared

in "Blank Verse: by Charles Lloyd and Charles Lamb," but neither was reprinted.

Written a Year after the Events (p. 73)

The "events" were, of course, Mary's derangement and his mother's death. The poem expresses partly the feeling of calm, and of reconciliation and atonement, with which Mary had learned to think of her mother's spirit as looking down upon her —and partly those regrets for ungrateful years, that wishing back of the unvalued "Days of a mother's fondness to her child, her little one," which may be found uttered earlier in a letter to Coleridge written some seven weeks after that mother's death. This poem was sent to Coleridge, and was published in "Blank Verse," but not afterwards reprinted by Lamb.

Written soon after the Preceding Poem (p. 75)

The circumstances of his mother's death have been described at vol. ii. xxii–xxv. There are many passages in "Rosamund Gray" that bear upon all that Lamb wrote at this time, especially upon this poem. The passage here, for instance, beginning "*A wayward son, ofttimes, I was to thee*" relates itself at once to that at p. 24 of this volume: "I would ask pardon of her for all my omissions of duty, for all the little asperities in my temper, which have so often grieved her gentle spirit when living." And what follows there is still closer to the domestic scene; for it was sitting in "her old elbow-chair" that the mother met her death at her daughter's hands. "Rosamund Gray" is a confusing masque of minds and voices, that mingle inextricably or suddenly replace one another: now it seems Mary that is speaking, and now Charles. At p. 3, for instance, this may refer to either, but I think it refers in the first lines to Charles, and in the last ones to Mary: "Rosamund's mind was pensive and reflective, rather than what passes usually for *clever* or *acute*. From a child she was remarkably shy and thoughtful—this was taken for stupidity and want of feeling; and the child has been sometimes whipt for being a *stubborn thing*, when her little heart was almost bursting with affection."

"*A heavy lot hath he, most wretched man:*" there is a reference here to the terrible curse in which Italianate hatred expressed itself—"ultimus suorum moriatur!"

To Charles Lloyd (p. 76)

This was written after leaving Lloyd, with whom he had been upon a visit to Southey, who was then staying at Burton, near Christchurch, in Hampshire. In sending a copy of the poem to Coleridge, Lamb observed, "To understand some of it, you must remember that at that time he was very much perplexed in his

mind." These perplexities, which were of a "religious" character, and tending towards despair, only deepened as time went on, and had eternity for their topic.

Composed at Midnight (p. 77)

This may be regarded as a pendant to the preceding poem. It expresses, I think, the course and outcome of Lamb's subsequent and more inward reflections upon the subject of those religious glooms and despairs which hung upon the mind of his friend Lloyd: and it expresses his comment upon the creeds—or crimes in the form of dogma—which beget such glooms and such despairs by making religion a kind of Devil-worship, and human existence a scene of monstrous tyranny and unthinkable atrocity and injustice, from which there is no escape even by death.

Written on Christmas Day, 1797 (p. 79)

This was written at a sad time, and refers to an occurrence which more nearly broke his spirit utterly than any before or after: namely, Mary's first relapse into insanity within a twelvemonth of her recovery and her release. He had weathered the great storm of the preceding year bravely—had battled with success to secure his sister's return to the world—had manfully taken upon his young shoulders the burden of the household and the legal responsibility for Mary's safe-keeping—and with it all, and at the end of all, had begun to gather serenity, and to see prospects of a subdued happiness for them both in the years to come—and, for himself, had begun even to venture some small buildings up of ambition again: when suddenly came a renewal of Mary's derangement, falling upon him like a blow. How stupifying the blow was, may be read in his letter to Coleridge written five weeks after this. Its first words alone are eloquent: "You have writ me many kind letters, and I have answered none of them. . . . An unnatural indifference has been creeping on me since my last misfortunes"—but the letter must be read. And with it, in conjunction with this poem, also the poem that here follows, if we would trace the path which Lamb's distressed mind was then taking in its search for some view, some explanation, if not some relief of its pain.

Living without God in the World (p. 80)

("Annual Anthology," 1799)

"Make me a Necessitarian," Lamb says to Coleridge in the early correspondence: and here we see that not Coleridge but his calamities have made him a necessitarian and something more. To the questionings that urge within him, as to the justice of God's ways to man, he is fain in the preceding poem to find an answer in that last confession of intellectual despair, the Godless

theory of the Potter and the Clay. It is a theory which adjudges a difficult case by denying the legal status and existence of the plaintiff: it asserts the nothingness of Man, and refuses to allow that his reasoning soul and his moral sense, which bring the action, are even a fact in the universe. This ultra-fatalist conception has its natural home in those parts of the world where man is cowed and abject, where despotism must be accepted, and redress or escape are not to be hoped for, even through crime. And to Charles Lamb at this moment, living in a bewilderment of troubles, and rained upon by the bludgeonings of chance, was not life even such an Asiatic despotism and an evil dream, full of dark and terrible questionings? Well, there is an answer to all questions, and an end of the pains of thought, in the theory of the Potter and the Clay: if you can only make yourself believe that you believe it. To believe it, perhaps you must preach it; and in any case a new convert is like to be a zealot for the cause. So, I think, may we trace the genesis of this poem: in which we see the gentle-hearted one eagerly deriding the intellect of man, the enthusiasm of science, the secular hopes of the world. He has reached, poor driven soul, in his search for a safe thinking-ground, the utmost point of unreason and the nadir of religious thought. But he has reached a limit, also, beyond which there can be no progress; and a point at which there can be no permanent abiding for him. There was no way, then, but a return; and he returned in silence. A palinode there must have been, but it was never audibly sung. Here, however, is the fact that faces us: that with this remarkable expression of a hectic, a perilous, an almost fanatical religiosity, the religious motive and religious topics abruptly disappear out of Lamb's life and out of his writings. He had gone to the utter verge, and returned in silence: there was a palinode, but it was never sung. And we may say, also, that from this moment—from the moment when he had been forced upon impossible and inhuman conclusions, and had returned from them in silence—Charles Lamb's Poetry ceases, and his Verse begins. One exception there might seem to be—the lines upon Hester Savory—but it is no real exception. And already in the poem which immediately follows here—in *The Old Familiar Faces*—we are aware of the change, we almost see the transition fully made. Let us not say, however, that it is a transition from the writer of the Early Poems to the writer of Complimentary Sonnets and of Album Verses. Rather it is an apparition; the apparition not only of the sheerly secular, but of the absolutely human as the topic of his concern, the subject-matter henceforth of his appraisements, his joys, his memories and regrets. "If he has turned away from speculation, and drawn close the curtain of thought, it is to keep out the dark and the cold; and to look with greater gladness on the faces that he loved, with the light of a human hearth upon them." For the potentialities, bleak or sultry, as the case may be, of metaphysics

and of theology in the young and solitary student who wishes to be made a Necessitarian, and to have the arguments by heart, and who "sins in almost adoring Priestley"—there is substituted the individual genius and cast of mind, so kindly to man and so cognate to the earth, that was to produce the Essay on *New Year's Eve*, and the study of the *Two Races of Men*, so full of relish and forgiveness, and *My Relations*, and the portrait of Bridget Elia, and of the Old Benchers, and of Sarah Battle—not to speak of five hundred letters to three-score of friends, the friendliest letters, and the fullest of humanity, in the world. All this must be counted before we say that anything was lost by the change. But a change there was, and a striking one, and the fact that claims to be recognised may be put, in a word, thus: that from the moment when Charles Lamb ceased to be able to speak of life with any confidence from the point of view of religion, he ceased to be a Poet—ceased, that is, to be a man expressing important things *directly* about life, and using poetic forms as a mould in which to pour the total character and meanings of a mind conscious of wide relations and of weighty purposes.

The Old Familiar Faces (p. 82)

("Blank Verse," 1798: "Works," 1818)

For a comment upon this, see the preceding Note. There has been some guess-work as to which of his friends at that time, Coleridge or Lloyd, was the friend whom he had "left abruptly." I incline to the view, which is at present the received one, that the verse commemorates a *momentary* quarrel—or something not quite a quarrel, but say a three days' coldness—which had lately occurred between him and Lloyd. The other friend would then be Coleridge. The words "*some are taken from me*" probably refer to Mary, who was at that time (January 1798) from home.

The Lover (p. 83)

(Written 1798: printed in "London Magazine," January 1822)

This was a passage written for "John Woodvil." It was sent to various friends while the play was in process of composition, and was referred to as "The Dying Lover." In the end it was not admitted into the play; but nearly twenty-four years later it appeared anonymously in the "London Magazine." Why Lamb should have discarded a passage in which he took such great pride is not easy to say off-hand, but it seems to me that the whole passage and its history are worth a good deal of attention. There is a curious look of biography about the whole thing, and there is a remarkable degree of self-portraiture in the second part of the passage. The mere presence of the name "Anna"

counts, of course, for very little or nothing at all, taken by itself: but taken along with the general impression that the thing gives, it is not without significance, especially as accounting for the discarding of the passage from a play which was to be published with his name, and yet the careful treasuring and the publication of it after such an æonal lapse of time! Was the passage, in fact, too close to a known circumstance in the life of Charles Lamb? This lover did not die, but we know that he went mad; and we know that through after life he had just such a smile as he describes, giving to a score of observers an impression which I have only generalised in saying ("Memoir," p. lxxix) "so bland, and sweet, and relenting it was, like a kind heart forgetting its own pain." He went mad; but when? Not on learning that his dream must end, that the romantic tie must be broken. He knew all about this perhaps a year before the correspondence begins; this was already the subject of his sonnets written "in the early summer of 1795": but it was the six weeks ending that year and beginning the next one that "your humble servant spent very agreeably in a madhouse at Hoxton." It is, at any rate, no profligate excess of conjecture to suppose that he may have been among the bidden guests to a wedding at the year's end—and that he so far miscalculated the strength and nature of the feelings which he had, so to say, hushed down within him. and reduced to a mute stillness, until he was cheated himself into thinking that they were asleep or even dead: knew so little of himself, and so far miscalculated the rending forces that the course of life had not yet eliminated and that were only lying in a kind of trance—was so far astray and so ignorant in regard to all this, that he permitted himself to go. And if he did, then assuredly he was submitting himself to an ordeal which such a nature as his, by all that we can gather of it as it then was, could not issue from prosperously or with much less than ruin. To me it is all exceedingly conceivable: given time and a monetary inducement, I could write the romance of it for Mr Mudie's subscribers, then everybody would see at a glance that it was a historical fact. But this is quite enough of original truth for one Note, except that I will refer the reader to another Note (vol. iii. p. 294) which contains some observations that are, in their contracted way, germane to this extensive subject.

Woodvil in Battle (p. 84)

This also was a "John Woodvil" fragment; to which I have ventured to give its present title. It was one of the passages which Lamb was most pleased with, and sent round to his friends and—in the end—omitted.

Helen (p. 85)

Lamb sent this to Coleridge in August 1800. "How do you like this little epigram? It is not my writing, nor had I a finger

in it. If you concur with me in thinking it very elegant and very original, I shall be tempted to name the author to you. I will just hint that it is almost or quite a first attempt." One may sympathise fully with this brotherly pride and joy in seeing his sister have courage to "try her hand," without thinking that this first attempt was by any means the best thing that Mary ever did. It was published, however, in the "Works" 1818.

Ballad from the German (p. 86)

One of Coleridge's "practical" schemes for engaging Lamb in literature and also in remunerative writing, was that he (Coleridge) should make prose translations of German poems, and that Lamb should then versify these renderings for the "Morning Post." Fortunately, nothing came of the scheme, which belongs to the era of 1802. This translation of Thekla's song seems to have been prepared on the system mentioned, and is, all things considered, much better than one would have expected, though the ending couldn't well be worse as a rendering of "Ich habe gelebt und geliebt!"

A Ballad of Rich and Poor (p. 86)

This and the succeeding poem were written while Lamb was engaged on the "Curious Fragments" (to which wisest Stuart said "No"—see vol. iii. p. 293), composed in imitation of old Burton. Both of them were worked into that patchwork, and, as I have already said, are not quite in their proper place out of it. *Hypochondriacus*, which was at first called *A Conceipt of Diabolical Possession*, was appended to the *Curious Fragments* in vol. iii. on grounds of reason, but is repeated here on grounds of convenience, lest any one should look for it among the Poems and, not finding it, should lay down the book in grief or anger. Those two, and the Ballad from the German, appeared in the "John Woodvil" vol. (1802) and were reprinted in the "Works."

Hester (p. 90)

It is curious that this poem, Lamb's own estimate of which is shown by the fact that he placed it first among the contents of his "Works," was never printed, seemingly, till 1818. In sending it to Manning in March 1803, he said: "Some verses I have made on the death of a young Quaker you may have heard me speak of as being in love with for some years while I lived at Pentonville, though I never spoke to her in my life." The years in Pentonville were scarce three in all, and it is likely that "in love with" is an emphatic way of saying "interested in." So, following the example of Sir Thomas More and other ancients, he constantly uses the word "darling" for "favourite." Hester has been identified with a Hester Savory who was married, at

the age of twenty-five, in July 1802, and died eight months later. I must say this identification seems to me doubtful. But if it be correct, then Lamb's ignoring of the fact that Hester had ever passed from the state of maidenhood, gives a curious interest and an added beauty to the poem.

Epitaph upon a Young Lady (p. 91)

This also was sent to Manning, but was written at the request of Rickman. Lamb does not seem to have known the subject of the verses, save through Rickman's account of her; but writing to Manning, he says: "Did I send you an epitaph I scribbled upon a poor girl who died at nineteen, a good girl, and a pretty girl, and a clever girl, but strangely neglected by all her friends and kin?" Her identity—that is to say, her name—is doubtful.

Dialogue Between a Mother and Child (p. 91)

This poem by Mary, and also the four sets of verses upon Pictures, which follow, were all published in the "Works." Those which begin "*Who art thou, fair one?*" and "*Maternal lady with the virgin grace*" were both sent by Lamb to Miss Wordsworth, in that letter (quoted in the Memoir, vol. ii. of this Edition, pp. xxxiii–xxxiv) which he wrote in June 1805, at a time when Mary was again "from home," and he feeling desolate and very fain to make much of everything that spoke of the absent one. For a reference to "the Lady Blanch," and the conflict of domestic and artistic motives and emotions that attended the purchase of that print, see the same volume, pp. 189–90.

A Farewell to Tobacco (p. 94)

("Reflector," No. iv. 1811: "Works," 1818)

Pace what is said in a passage in my Note on *Confessions of a Drunkard*, where I permitted myself for a moment to be led astray by Lamb's mystifications, the tobacco habit seems not only to have been acquired early, but to have been felt to be injurious some years before the "Farewell" was decided upon—or rather, *written*. Tobacco smoke was a strong element in the celestial air that lay around those Nights and Suppers of the Gods at the Salutation and Cat in the Christmastide of 1794. In June 1796 he writes (very late one night), "I have been drinking egg-hot and smoking Oronooko; my eyes and brain are heavy and asleep, but my heart is awake; and if words came as ready as ideas, and ideas as feelings, I could say ten hundred kind things." How much of this flow of soul on that delightful evening was due to tobacco, and how much to the unnamed ingredients in egg-hot, it is not for any sober man to say: but twenty-six years later, when he wrote his *Character of the Late Elia*, he spoke thus of the effects of tobacco upon his departed friend: "He took it, he would say, as a solvent of speech. Marry—as the friendly vapour

ascended, how his prattle would curl up sometimes with it! the ligaments which tongue-tied him, were loosened, and the stammerer went forth a statist!" Nevertheless, already in 1803 he had begun to consider whether he must not divorce himself from this source of inspiration and this aid to eloquence: see the letter to Coleridge, April 13—a foolish month and unfortunate date upon which to embark upon any important resolutions. In September 1805 he sent this memorable poem to Wordsworth, saying, "But, now I have bid farewell to my 'Sweet Enemy' Tobacco, as you will see in my next page, I perhaps shall get soberly to work." But to Hazlitt, five months later, he sends, amongst other news, this: "I am going to leave off smoke. In the meantime, I am so smoky with last night's ten pipes, that I must leave off." . . . On December 11, announcing the withdrawal of poor "Mr H." amid universal hissings and outcries of anger and contempt—he says to Miss Stoddart: "We are determined not to be cast down. I am going to leave off tobacco, and then we must thrive. A smoking man must write smoky farces." Years passed; and, not to make too long a story of it, discoloured ceilings were a feature of the many homes in which Charles Lamb set up his rest—till the next removal. A remark in a letter to Hood, written from Colebrook Row in 1823, may explain his difficulty: "I design to give up smoking; but I have not yet fixed upon the equivalent vice. I must have *quid pro quo;* or *quo pro quid*, as Tom Woodgate would correct me." But the more reasonable interpretation of the whole history is surely this: that the resolution to give up tobacco was too beautiful and heroic a conception to act upon at once, and so to have done with it and be quit of it, and be the poorer in the grand stock of moral purpose for the rest of time. It was a wise economy, by which his whole being was enriched and kept large and visionary, to keep the actual and final bidding farewell to tobacco at the stage of an aspiration, a noble purpose, linking the ages of his life together, like Wordsworth's rainbow in the sky, and so to live with it, as the fatted calf lived with the family, for years and years and years.

The Ape (p. 98)

("London Magazine," October 1820)

One of those things which Lamb kept by him in MS. for periods of ten, fifteen, and even twenty years, and then took it into his head to send to press. This was prefaced in the magazine by the following passage, signed with four stars—all the signature which the contribution had:—

"TO THE EDITOR.

"Mr Editor,—The riddling lines which I send you, were written upon a young lady, who, from her diverting sportiveness

in childhood, was named by her friends THE APE. When the verses were written, L. M. had outgrown the title—but not the memory of it—being in her teens, and consequently past child-tricks. They are an endeavour to express that perplexity, which one feels at any alteration, even supposed for the better, in a beloved object; with a little oblique grudging at TIME, who cannot bestow new graces without taking away some portion of the older ones, which we can ill miss."

* * * *

L. M. was Louisa Martin, whom we shall meet again presently, not so *very* much changed.

SALOME: SUMMER FRIENDS (pp. 100–102)

Of those two poems by Mary, the first appeared in the "Works," and the second is now, I believe, printed for the first time. It was one of four pieces by Charles and Mary which were copied by Robert Lloyd, and enclosed in a letter to his wife, on April 4, 1809. Lloyd was then on a visit to London, and he found the Lambs engaged upon "Poetry for Children," in which work the poems which he copied were intended to appear. This one, however, which was signed M. L., did not appear in that book, nor elsewhere, so that but for Lloyd it would have been entirely lost.

TO THORNTON LEIGH HUNT (p. 103)

("Examiner," January 1, 1815: "Works," 1818)

"My eldest little boy, to whom Lamb," says Leigh Hunt, "addressed some charming verses on the occasion, was my constant companion, and we used to play all sorts of juvenile games together. It was, probably, in dreaming of one of these games (but the words had a more touching effect on my ear) that he exclaimed one night in his sleep, 'No; I'm not lost; I'm found.' Neither he nor I were very strong at that time." It was the time (extending from Feb. 3, 1813 to Feb. 3, 1815) when Leigh Hunt was enduring imprisonment for a libel on the excellent Prince Regent. And then it was that "The Lambs came to comfort me in all weathers, hail or sunshine, in daylight and in darkness, even in the dreadful frost and snow of the beginning of 1814." I have quoted the exclamation of the sleeping child here, because it serves to relate this poem with the passage in *Witches and Other Night Fears* (vol. i. p. 134), and with that *Letter to Robert Southey, Esquire*, which grew out of it (vol. iii. pp. 221–236; also pp. 328–333).

SONNETS: TO MISS KELLY: JOHN LAMB: THE FAMILY NAME: SWANS IN KENSINGTON GARDEN (pp. 105–6)

Lamb placed this first among the Sonnets in vol. i. of his "Works." I do not know that it had anywhere previously

appeared, and we know neither its precise date nor that of the three sonnets which immediately follow here. The view of Miss Kelly's character as an artist and a woman, and the special quality of her art, is that which we find expressed in the "Examiner" criticisms, especially in the one which I have entitled "The New Style of Acting" (vol. iii. pp. 40–42). That article would seem, indeed, to fix the date of this sonnet about July 1813. The one on *The Family Name* has attaching to it the curious adventitious interest of actually associating the name of Goethe for one impossible moment with the name of Charles Lamb. Crabb Robinson's Diary records a visit to Goethe in 1829, and—"I inquired whether he knew the name of Lamb." "Oh, yes! Did he not write a pretty sonnet on his own name?" A little thing, but somehow apparitional and startling! The brotherly and fond, and yet humorous and *somewhat* quizzical tone of the sonnet *To John Lamb, Esq.*, is to be compared with the Essay *My Relations* (vol. i. pp. 139–147).

Sonnets: To Martin Charles Burney: To Miss Burney (pp. 107 and 109)

To Martin Burney, that greatest among the greater favourites both of Charles and Mary Lamb, the second volume of the "Works" was thus dedicated. He was a barrister, and the son of Captain (more usually referred to as Admiral) Burney, who had sailed with Cook, and made the first pun in the Otaheite language, and whose departure from this world took away half the interest and all the fun of whist. As to the second Burney sonnet, the "bright spirits" whom it refers to seem to be, taken in their genealogical order, these: (1) Dr. Charles Burney, the musician, and a member of Johnson's circle, was he who "sought through science of sweet sounds his fame." (2) His *son*, the Rev. Charles Burney, was amongst those "In learning who have borne distinguished parts," and his learned library (the Burney Collection) was bought by the British Museum. His *daughters* were literary: (3) "And foremost she, renowned for many a tale," namely, Fanny Burney, the author of "Evelina," and other works that are more famous than favoured by readers now-a-days. (4) "Nor dost thou, Sarah"—the compliment is addressed to her sister. Finally, the exponent of "*the tasteful arts*" was (5) their cousin, Edward Burney, the portrait painter and book illustrator, for whom see the Essay *Valentine's Day*, vol. i. pp. 112–113. This sonnet to Miss Burney appeared in the "Morning Chronicle," 1820, and was not republished by Lamb.

To a Celebrated Female Performer (p. 107)

("Morning Chronicle," 1819: "Album Verses," 1830)

The celebrated performer was Miss Fanny Kelly.

Work (p. 108)

The topic, regarded as it is here regarded, was congenial to Lamb, and his letters abound in what may be looked upon as prose prelusions to this final and sufficient utterance. It first appeared in the "Examiner" in 1819, and Lamb seems to have felt on having written it that he had expressed something that was his meaning at all times and that could never come out of season. He sent copies to friends from time to time, as a thing that was sure to do them good: to his fellow slave of the India House desk, for instance, W. Marter, in 1824; and he reprinted it in "Album Verses," where it was followed by the sonnet on *Leisure* (see p. 113).

Written at Cambridge (p. 108)

("Examiner," 1819; "Album Verses," 1830)

This sonnet is to be compared with the Essay *Oxford in the Vacation* (vol. i., and more especially pp. 15, 16). Cambridge rather than Oxford was the particular academic shade which Lamb was apt to haunt on a sunshine holiday: and Manning was of Cambridge: so had Milton been.

St. Crispin to Mr Gifford (p. 109)

("Examiner," 1819; "Poetical Recreations of 'The Champion,'" 1822)

If we are good-natured, we will read this as a mischievous and Lamby production; if we are not good-natured, but rather put ourselves in the position of the man to whom it was addressed, we must adjudge it to be stupid and unworthy. Gifford had his limitations, and his rather obvious faults both as a partisan writer and a critic, and he had also been accessory in a way—but not in a very immediate or conscious way—to some ugly strokes aimed at Lamb: but surely the least disgraceful point one could have fixed on in his character or career was the fact that he *had* been a cobbler, and *had* nevertheless become the Editor of the "Quarterly." But the truth is that the thing *was* written in the Lamby and mischievous vein, with much feeling of the fun of writing it, and no realization of what it would look like when read as a serious retort. Yet some "admirers" of Lamb have done him the indignity of reading it so, and professing to relish it in that sense! Whereas if Lamb had ever met Gifford, he would have worried himself about that exploit for the rest of his life.

In Tabulam Eximii Pictoris (p. 110)

("The Champion," May 6, 1820; Tom Taylor's "Life of Haydon," 1853)

The picture was Haydon's "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem,"

which is now in the Art Gallery of Philadelphia. Exhibited at the Egyptian Hall in 1820, it had an immense success, and brought £1700 of gate-money to the artist, who was one of the Lamb circle.

Sonnets: To the Author of Poems: To my Friend the Indicator (pp. 111 and 112)

It is curious that Lamb should have felt that there was something queer, something abnormal, in Procter's writing under a pseudonym; something that would somehow deprive him of the fame that might be won by his work. But we know, not from this sonnet alone, that he had that feeling, and would dwell on the point, and return to it in jest and earnest: Lamb, who is known to all the world by the works signed "Elia"! This sonnet appeared in the "London Magazine" (Sept. 1820), but, if only for consistency's sake, was *not* signed Elia. When it was republished in "Album Verses" the second line was changed to its present form: originally it had run "In riddling *Junius*, or in *L———e's* name." This was the "hit at Moore in his name of Little" referred to in the Note to *The Child Angel* (vol. ii. p. 272).

To my Friend the Indicator was sent to Leigh Hunt, who quoted it in that journal (in an article on "Commentatory Verses"—September, 1820) with this preamble:—

"Every pleasure we could experience in a friend's approbation, we have felt in receiving the following verses. They are from a writer, who of all other men, knows how to extricate a common thing from commonness, and to give it an underlook of pleasant consciousness and wisdom. We knew him directly, in spite of his stars. His hand as well as heart betrayed him."

I am afraid the heart had a little cooled towards Hunt in later years; at any rate, this was not republished in "Album Verses."

To Sheridan Knowles: To the Editor of the "Every-Day Book" (pp. 111 and 113)

The first of these poems appeared in the same number of the "London Magazine" as the sonnet to Barry Cornwall, 1820, being the year when Macready made a great appearance in "Virginius" at Covent Garden. It was through the Hazlitts that Lamb was brought acquainted with Knowles quite early. He was a great favourite, but Mary never learned how to spell his name, and Charles gave him a wrong initial in the title of this poem, not only in the "London," but afterwards in "Album Verses." Talfourd says that "Lamb had almost lost his taste for acted tragedy, as the sad realities of life had pressed more nearly on him; yet he made an exception in favour of the first and happiest part of 'Virginius'—those paternal scenes which stand alone in modern drama, and which Macready informed with the fulness of a father's affection." An Ionic, yea, a Corinthian passage.

The quatrains to "ingenuous Hone" were published in the "London Magazine" for May 1825, and later received a place in "Album Verses." The ingenuous one reproduced them in the "Every-Day Book" in 1825, with an acknowledgement in verse quite worthy of the occasion: and when the series of the Days was done and the Book was published *as* a book, he dedicated the completed work to Charles and Mary Lamb. Hone was on the wrong side—that is to say the right side—in politics; and since he was not pleased with the world as it was, the world as it was made matters uncomfortable for him. In styling the Editor of the "Table Book" "friend Hone," Lamb was doing a thing not less disreputable than in visiting the Editor of the "Examiner" when he was in prison for libelling his anointed Regent. A curious point in common between the dramatist and actor Sheridan Knowles and the antiquarian, journalist, and reformer William Hone, was that both passed into a phase of rather extreme religiosity in their later years, and really became a sort of clergymen.

Pindaric Ode to the Tread-mill (p. 115)

("New Times," 1825: "Album Verses," 1830)

Published in the "New Times" in 1825, this was sent to Walter Wilson in May 1829 along with the *Estimate of De Foe's Secondary Novels* (see vol. iii. of this Edition, with Note at p. 334), but it did not appear in Wilson's book. As to Defoe, it was for a parlous piece of irony of his (misunderstood exactly as the *Confessions of a Drunkard* have been misunderstood), seemingly calling for the extermination of Dissenters, that he was condemned to stand three days in the pillory, and to lie in prison during the Queen's pleasure. Accordingly, he stood in the pillory, surrounded by a sympathetic mob that protected him and drank his health; and on one of these days it was that he wrote his noble *Hymn to the Pillory*, which Lamb here nobly seeks to emulate.

On an Infant Dying as soon as Born (p. 119)

("Gem," 1829: "Album Verses," 1830)

The infant was the first-born of his friend Hood. There is a letter in which Lamb tells Hood, "Your news has spoil'd us a merry meeting . . . and elicited a flood of tears from Mary." He then proceeds in an extravagantly whimsical vein—not to show too much feeling—and tells the father that he (C. L.) has "won sexpence of Moxon by the *sex* of the dear gone one." But this poem, in which his truer feelings had utterance, followed; and was printed in the "Gem," of which Hood was the Editor.

To Bernard Barton: The Young Catechist (pp. 121–2)

("Album Verses," 1830)

The Reader will meet these poems again in "The Letters."

Suffice it to say here that Ann Knight was a Quakeress, a schoolmistress, a friend of Barton's, and immensely taken to by the Lambs. *Classic Mitford* was the Rev. John Mitford, who edited many poets, especially Milton, Gray, and Vincent Bourne. *Carrington Bowles* kept a print-shop in St. Paul's Church-yard, and is referred to in Essays, Letters, and even, I think, the Children's Books.

Lines suggested by a Sight of Waltham Cross (p. 125)

("English Man's Magazine," 1831)

I have brought this forward from among the Political and Burlesque verse, with which it has hitherto been placed by the Editors. The sincerity and dignity of the feeling which it expresses should place it, I think, in a better category, and secure for it its half-page in the main volume of Lamb's proper "Works." It has reference, of course, to the circumstances of stealth and violence that attended the removal of Queen Caroline's remains for burial in Hanover.

Epicedium (p. 125)

("Table Book," 1827: "Album Verses," 1830)

This title was added in "Album Verses," or rather superimposed, upon the earlier one. Lamb must have got the unusual word *Epicedium* (or *Epicedion*) from "Statius." We know, as a fact, that when despatching to Coleridge a quantity of books which the latter had left with him, he confessed to withholding Statius, in the interest of his friend's style. "Statius," he said, "is turgid." This funeral dirge—for that is what ἐπικήδειον means—celebrates a generation of Widford folk of whom we know nothing. Even Mr Lucas, who has gone into everything that concerns Lamb and his works with unexampled thoroughness, has been unable, apparently, to add anything to what we know—or rather don't know—although he has ransacked registers, interviewed oldest inhabitants, and interrogated the tombstones of the dead. Old Dorrell remains the only name that has much meaning for us, and that meaning itself cannot be expressed without a note of interrogation. "*Whose end might affright us*" is explained by a couple of stanzas in the original version which Lamb afterwards omitted:—

Had he mended in right time,
He need not in night time,
(That black hour and fright-time)
  Till sexton interred him
Have groaned in his coffin
While demons stood scoffing—
You'd ha' thought him a-coughing—
  My own father[1] heard him!

[1] Who sat up with him.

Could gain so importune,
With occasion opportune,
That for a poor Fortune
That should have been ours [1]
In soul he should venture
To pierce the dim center
Where will-forgers enter
Amid the dark Powers?—

From which we may gather that old Dorrell had forged a will to the detriment of the Lambs; and elsewhere we have indications that the amount for which he was willing to "pierce the dim center" was (see vol. i. p. 56) a poor two thousand pounds.

The Gipsy's Malison: The Christening (pp. 128–9)

("Album Verses," 1830)

Both of these were published in "Blackwood's Magazine," the first in January 1829 and the second in May. There is a letter to Bernard Barton in which Lamb tells the circumstances which suggested the *Gipsy's Malison*—and how the editors of the "Gem" had rejected this offering, on the ground that it "would shock all mothers." It was indeed a miraculously unsuitable contribution, whatever might be its psychological merits or its interesting peculiarities of structure, of which Lamb was disposed to make much. This was the occasion upon which, sheer perversity lifting him to the pinnacle of genius, he exclaimed: "Damn the age—I will write for Antiquity!" The juxtaposition of this and the following is a thing to be taken note of by the student of Lamb's mind and character. According to Mr W. C. Hazlitt, the christening here celebrated was that of the child of some Enfield friends called May, at which Charles and Mary stood sponsors. On some other occasion, certainly, he says he is about to stand sponsor, but I have mislaid the reference.

Harmony in Unlikeness (p. 130)

("Album Verses," 1830)

Very odd conjectures have been made about this sonnet. Canon Ainger says that of the "*two lovely damsels*" whom it describes, "the fair Maria is, of course, Mary Lamb." Mary Lamb was at that time sixty-four years of age, and Emma Isola was a girl of twenty, so that the basis of comparison was rather wanting, to say the least. As for the alleged "playfulness" of the sonnet, nobody would ever have guessed it to be "playful," unless he had *first assumed* that one of the two lovely damsels was between sixty and seventy. Whoever Maria was, it was not Mary; and I believe Mr J. A. Rutter has guessed rightly in naming Miss Fryer. There is a confirmatory indication to which my attention

[1] I have this fact from parental tradition only.

has been called by Surgeon-Major Butterworth (an enthusiastic and exact Elian, deeply conversant in all the letter of the master's works, albeit not making a profession of his knowledge, like some of us), namely, this passage in a letter to Barton, July 3, 1829. "My sister is again taken ill, and I am obliged to remove her out of the house for many weeks, I fear, before I can hope to have her again. I have been very desolate indeed. My loneliness is a little abated by my young friend Emma having just come here for her holidays, and a schoolfellow of hers that was, with her. Still, the house is not the same, though she is the same. Mary had been pleasing herself with the prospect of seeing her at this time; and with all their company, the house feels at times a frightful solitude." Miss Fryer was the school-fellow in question; and she and Emma were doubtless the two lovely damsels with whom he walked forth "By Enfield lanes and Winchmore's verdant hill." Cannot we see the two girls trying, by their walking and their talking, to keep him from sinking into abstraction and dejection? And not without effect. As for the sonnet, its feeling is not one of "playfulness," but of observation, and of a sad and grateful kind of cheerfulness. Emma, it should be added, was by this time a governess, at Fornham: hence the holidays.

To Louisa Morgan (p. 131)

These lines, which are copied from Charles Lamb's Album by the kind permission of Mrs Alfred Morrison, were addressed to the daughter of John Morgan, a very early friend of the Lamb-Coleridge-Wordsworth group, who is frequently mentioned in the Letters. He was not prosperous, and his latter years were burdened, it would seem, with more than one kind of trouble. "Morgan is a little better," writes Lamb to Cottle in 1829, "can read a little, etc.; but cannot join Mrs M. till the Insolvent Act (or whatever it is called) takes place. Then, I hope, he will stand clear of all debts. Meantime, he has a most exemplary nurse and kind companion in Miss Brent." The "*nook of blessedness*" which the verses refer to was, in some small part, provided by Lamb himself, since upon an annual subsidy to which he, along with other old friends, contributed regularly, John Morgan was much dependent for the comforts of his later years.

One Dip (p. 132)

I am not sure that this ought not to have been relegated to another department of the volume. It was written for young Hessey (son of the Publisher) who was at Merchant Taylors School at this time, and was required to write an epigram on the motto "Brevis esse laboro." It appears that the boys were permitted to enlist such expert aid in dealing with their school tasks, and Lamb was willing. *Cuique Suum* (see p. 203) was written at the same time, in

the same good cause of education, for the other son of Hessey. The things were signed by the schoolboys: hence the signature at p. 132.

She is Going: Nonsense Verses: Free Thoughts (pp. 133–5)

The first of these appeared in "Album Verses." We do not quite know what family was losing Margaret, or when. It cannot have been his Enfield friends the Wildes, for they had but one daughter and her name was Emily Thomasine. "Nonsense Verses," which are evidently a recantation of the pious sentiment of "Angel Help," were found wrapping some of William Hazlitt's hair, and were first published by W. C. Hazlitt. *Free Thoughts on Eminent Composers* has been set up from the autograph copy sent by Lamb to William Ayrton.

To a Young Friend (p. 136)

("Album Verses," 1830)

When exactly Lamb first met Emma Isola, seems a little uncertain. According to Mr Lucas it was in 1820, and according to Mr Hazlitt it was nearer 1817. Writing on Jan. 22, 1829, Lamb speaks of her as "A silent brown girl, who for the last twelve years has rambled about our house in her Christmas holidays." There he was making the least of the fact, if he was making the most of the time. In March 14, 1830, he refers to her as "a very dear young friend of ours . . . Emma Isola, with whom we got acquainted at our first visit to your [Mr Ayrton's] sister at Cambridge." Lamb's friendship with the Ayrtons dated from 1815, or earlier. At any rate, Emma was the daughter of Charles Isola, an Esquire Bedell of Cambridge University, who in turn was the son of Agostino Isola, a blameless political refugee of mild character and scholarly tastes, who had settled at Cambridge and taught Italian there for many years, to Wordsworth and Pitt amongst others. After her father's death in 1823, which left her unprovided for, Emma came under the charge of an aunt, but she had already begun to be a holiday guest of the Lambs before that. As time went on, their house came to be recognised as her home, and her final status was that of an adopted daughter. To qualify her for independence, in case she did not marry, they advanced her educational attainments beyond what was taught in school. "Item, I have made her a tolerable Latinist," says Charles: and Mary's verses *To Emma, Learning Latin and Desponding* (p. 123) are a memorial of some moment of difficulty and discouragement in the quest of that perfection. In 1829–30 she was engaged as governess in the family of Mrs Williams, of Fornham; till, on her falling ill, she was brought home again. But in May 1833 he writes to Wordsworth: "I am about to lose my old and only

walk-companion, whose mirthful spirits were 'the youth of our house,' Emma Isola. I have her here now for a little while. . . . With my perfect approval and more than concurrence, she is to be wedded to Moxon at the end of August." Moxon was a young poet who by an older poet (Samuel Rogers—"the Veteran in Verse"—see p. 54) was set up as a publisher. See "Critical Essays" (vol. iii. of this Edition), pp. 262 and 336; also the present volume, p. 142; where the description of Emma recalls that in *Harmony in Unlikeness*.

To Charles Aders: The Self-Enchanted: The First Leaf (pp. 139–41)

The first of these was published in Hone's "Year Book," 1831; the second in the "Athenæum, 1832; and the third, which was apparently never printed in Lamb's life-time, has been set up from the original (or at least a copy in Lamb's handwriting) in the Album in the possession of Mrs. Blakiston.

To Samuel Rogers: To T. Stothard (p. 143)

In a letter to Rogers (Dec. 1833) acknowledging an early copy of the second illustrated edition of the Veteran's Poems, Lamb says: "I have tried my hand at a sonnet in the 'Times.' But the turn I gave it, though I hoped it would not displease you, I thought might not be equally agreeable to your artist. I met that dear old man at poor Henry's with you, and again at Carey's; and it was sublime to see him sit, deaf, and enjoy all that was going on in mirth with the company. He reposed upon the many graceful, many fantastic images he had created; with them he dined and took wine. I have ventured at an antagonist copy of verses in the 'Athenæum' to *him*, in which he is as everything and you as nothing. He is no lawyer who cannot take two sides." The "*Poor Henry*" referred to was that brother of the poet whose death is the subject of a sonnet at p. 130.

Cheap Gifts: To Clara Novello: To Margaret W—— (pp. 144–6)

These were published in the "Athenæum"; the first two during his life (Feb. and July 1834), the second after his death, namely on March 14, 1835. This is said to have been the last thing that Lamb wrote. Who Margaret was, is uncertain; but I fancy she is the Margaret of *She is Going* (p. 133). To her, at any rate, we are indebted for it that the last of all Lamb's Poems is beautiful, and that its last line expresses an infinite kindness that was like his nature, uttering a benediction.

OTHER ALBUM VERSES AND ACROSTICS, OF UNCERTAIN DATE

Not all of these are of uncertain date. The lines for the Album of Lucy Barton, for instance, were sent on Sept. 30, 1824; and those to Mrs Williams' daughters belong to April 1830. But for the most part these are dateless things, and the exceptions are placed here because they belong to their genus rather than to their time. The time, for the most part also, would be considered the day of small things in poetry, with Lamb. He was prepared to regard it in that way himself. "I have gone lately into the acrostic line," he writes to Southey in 1830. "I find genius (such as I had) declines with me, but I get clever. Do you know anybody that wants charades, or such things, for Albums? I do 'em at so much a sheet." A few days earlier, writing to Mrs Williams (and enclosing more verses), he humorously begs her to have inserted in "her county paper" something like this advertisement: "To the nobility, gentry, and others, about Bury: C. Lamb respectfully informs his friends and the public in general that he is leaving off business in the Acrostic line, and is going into an entirely new line, Rebuses and Charades done as usual and upon the old terms. Also, Epitaphs to suit the memory of any person deceased." Thus good-humouredly does he belittle a kind of literary productions that were, to be sure, not very great. But there has been unnecessary disparagement of these not great productions; or, what comes to the same thing, unnecessary apologies for them. They make, altogether, a very pleasant fact in the later life of Charles Lamb, and I would no more be without them than I would be without his early—more serious—more poetic—poetry. He had no more to say in that kind; but he used his old craftsmanship in the making of trifles that expressed affection and added to the world's stock of innocent gratification. And when all is said, I do not know who has written any body of such lesser literature which will bear a moment's comparison with Lamb's gift in this kind to his friends and to us. Extensive annotation, however, the things do not call for—a number of the persons named, indeed, remain but names to us—so I shall rapidly refer to them under their pages and not under their titles.

P. 147. "What is an Album?" seems to have been repeatedly copied by Lamb, and will be found quoted (with a difference) in his article on Vincent Bourne's poetry—see "Critical Essays," p. 260.

P. 148. The clergyman's lady was Mrs Williams, already referred to. For her also was the Epitaph at p. 163 written, for her youngest daughter the Acrostic that there follows, and for another daughter the Acrostic which spells Josepha Maria at p. 151. The

Williams correspondence which will be found in vol. xii. invests these trifles with a pathetic interest, and a connotation, if one may use the phrase, of social kindness and moral beauty.

Pp. 150–4. Who Miss ——— and the French Teacher were, I do not know. Miss Daubeny was a schoolfellow of Emma Isola's at Dulwich. Mrs Jane Towers, the "lady unknown," remains "to me unknown." The lines *In My Own Album* completed the first section of "Album Verses," consisting of this and the eight preceding pieces.

P. 155. This would appear to have been written (like *The First Leaf* and some other pieces) in more than one Album. It is printed here from a collation made by Mr Hazlitt.

Pp. 156-60. Edith Southey and Dora Wordsworth had each a Poet to her father. Rotha Q. had a Poet to her godfather and, so to say, step-grandfather. She was the daughter of Wordsworth's friend Edward Quillinan, who, in a second marriage, took to wife Dora Wordsworth. Catherine Orkney and Sarah Thomas are unknown. The Asburys we shall meet in the Letters. The verses to them are from Charles Lamb's Album.

Pp. 164-68. Sarah James of Beguildy was nurse and companion to Mary Lamb as early as 1822, and the later years of Mary's life were lived under her care, at Miss James's house in Alpha Road, St John's Wood. By kind permission of Mr John Hollingshead, these verses are here reprinted from his autobiography ("My Lifetime," 2 vols.), a work which contains some valuable particulars, and some vivid passages of description, concerning both Charles and Mary Lamb. Mr Hollingshead, who knew Mary Lamb, is the grand-nephew of Miss James: who was daughter of the Rector of Beguildy in Shropshire—hence the allusion to "those old church bells." The Fields were the wife and sisters of Barron Field, the "Distant Correspondent" of Elia. *Sarah's* "other name" we know, but we know no more about Sarah *The Sisters* were the Novello girls.

Translations (pp. 170–194)

For Vincent Bourne, see vol. i. p. 311, and vol. ii. pp. 255 and 336; and references in the Letters. There were ten editions of his Poems published between 1721 and 1825, the merit of the Mitford edition (1840), from which the text for our pages has been taken, being that it finally collected and separated: collected all the Poems that had appeared in various previous publications; and separated them from Letters, &c., and from some poems formerly printed along with Vincent Bourne's, but not written by him. It is worth noting that V. B. entitled his book not "Poemata," but "Poematia": a more modest word, and also, as a post-classical word, more appropriately designating the works of a post-classical Latin Poet. He is as Latin as the Florilegium and as English as Hogarth. He has had no successor worthy to be

named beside him, in his particular vein of unfastidious excellence and reality, except W. E. Henley, who also called his poems *Poematia*—that is, "A Book of Verses." Lamb first came upon Vincent Bourne in 1815. His translation of the *Epitaph on a Dog* appeared in the "Indicator" in 1820, and again in the Essay *On the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis*. Two others were quoted in his article on Vincent Bourne (vol. iii. p. 255), and those three, with six more, made up the nine which appeared in "Album Verses," 1830.

Of the translations from those other post-classical Poets, Suidas and Palingenius, it is only necessary to say that *Hercules Pacificatus* appeared in the "Englishman's Magazine" (Moxon's luckless venture) in August 1831: *The Parting Speech of the Celestial Messenger* and *Existence No Blessing*, both in the "Athenæum" in 1832.

Political Verses and Epigrams (pp. 195–202)

Lamb's Political Verse is somewhat of the nature of a foreign body imbedded in the system of his works. It does not belong organically to what one may call the literary physiology of the whole, and it only belongs to his mental physiology by way of exception, aberration and excess. It is a part of him as some self-contradictions and eccentricities may have been, but not so much a part of him as most of his eccentricities and self-contradictions were. There was never a man who had less aptitude, and, one may say, less real inclination, for taking a political view of things; and yet with politics, as a kind of irresponsible "aside" from his real self and his real interests, he meddled in a kind of interjectional way for twenty years. In it all he was never so much a politician as he was a party man, and party meant for him neither more nor less than the side which his friends were fighting on. I do not believe that he ever cared a broken straw for the side on its own account, or wrote on political questions two lines which had for him much more than a literary or humorous or make-believe interest, or that expressed any other passion than the artistic passion for high colours, bright points, and swashing blows. His friends Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth were, at the turn of the century, "again the government:" so he also was again the government, and rejoiced in getting his knife, or his pen, or his penknife, under the fifth rib of men whom he had no personal—and, for that matter, not much political—objection to. Of those friends—Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth—we may say that, like Mr Gladstone's old friend Peter, they went to the bad. But also they went a little out of Lamb's immediate life about the same time, and the new friends, most notably Hazlitt, were still men of the attacking party: and after Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt: and concurrently with Leigh Hunt and with Hazlitt, Thelwall—all these kept up a kind of tradition of Radicalism in the personal atmosphere around Charles Lamb, and kept him consistent in his

character as a lampoonist. But whether attacking Ministers in the "Morning Post" and the "Albion," or the Regent in the "Examiner," or the King in the "Champion," he was, from first to last, about as much inspired by political feeling as he was by the differential calculus. "It was all play:" partly the play-impulse of art, partly the fun of being with one's friends in a fray, partly that instinct of contumacity which was the guiding principle of his conduct in presence of all things and occasions oppressively august. He *would* joke at a funeral—he *would* misbehave at a marriage or a christening—and if he wasn't to insult his King, who, in the name of wonder, was he to insult? So perhaps one may say that, after all, he *had* a kind of affinity with the attacking party and an innate love for their business; but only as a small boy has an innate love for cock-shies, which is ever faithful to the opportunities that Heaven has sent it. I do not mean to assert that Lamb wrote his political interjections with his tongue always in his cheek, or that he did not write some of them with a kind of feeling. But the feeling was about as rootless as anything can be that is to yield any kind of flower. His associates and cronies, a number of them, were men of that world; and it was his friendship with men more than his concern in any principles, that made him an occasional political writer, but never a politician: unless, indeed, we define a politician as a person without political principles of any sort. In his earlier engagements of this kind, the gentle-hearted Charles was merely an unscrupulous hack-writer, exercising a hireling ferocity for two guineas a-week. He knew it, and confessed it, and did not see that there was any harm done: witness his letter to Manning, Oct. 5, 1800. It was all part of the fun of the fair: and he was with his friends, and enjoying it—till he grew tired. Later, on the "Examiner" and the "Champion," he was still with his friends, though here a difference is to be noted. We may indicate the difference by saying that the charms of friendship were perhaps not necessary in order to draw from him some expressions of contempt for George the Gentleman, Regent and King.

Which brings me to the subject of a rather simple puzzle which has hitherto been regarded as a pathless mystery: namely, the signature "R. et R." appended to Lamb's political verses in "The Poetical Recreations of *The Champion*." This was a thinnish volume of reprinted pieces in prose and verse, published in 1822, the source from which most of the items were drawn being the "Champion" newspaper. Some (but, according to an editorial Note, not all) of Lamb's "Champion" verses were here reprinted, along with some others that had appeared not in the "Champion" but in the "Examiner." These verses were now, whatever their source, distinguished from the work of other contributors by the signature "R. et R.," which had appeared from time to time in the "Champion" during the year 1820. Some thirty years ago Mr Fitzgerald suggested that these enigmatic letters might stand

for "Romulus et Remus." In the long interval we have got no further; except that it has recently been suggested that the association of Romulus and Remus with a Wolf might be felt to give appropriateness to this signature for these very un-Lamb-like productions. Yes, if we could only remember to *think* of the Wolf. But I am afraid we should forget—it is so far away: Romulus and Remus are but in the middle distance. The reference, we may be sure, was a good deal nearer the writer's time, and a good deal closer to the main subject of these verses. Of whom, let us ask, and of whose counsellors and creatures were these verses—*The Triumph of the Whale*, *Two Epigrams*, *The Godlike*, *The Three Graves*, *A Projected Journey*, *The Unbeloved*, *A Coronation Ode*—of whom were they written but of George the Gentleman, Regent and King?—some of them while he was Regent, but most of them while he was King. And what so like Lamb, when it came to republishing those libels in the second year of George's Kingship, as the affixing to them all, not indeed the signature of his victim, but something as near that signature as he dared to go or the printer would have dared to set up? The ideal, of course, would have been to sign them "Georgius Rex," or "Georgius R.," but that, alas! was impossible. But "R. et R." was, if not the ideal, yet good enough to serve; and no reader of that day, assuredly, would miss the meaning of the subscription (*Regens et Rex*—Regent and King), or fail to enjoy its abounding impudence. That they should miss its meaning was indeed impossible. For it was immediately after George's earthly apotheosis, when He who had seemed so heroic as Regent now put on the divinity of Kingship, that the audacious signature first revealed itself in the "Champion," appended to that tribute of loyal admiration, *The Godlike*. The signature was a particularly happy thought, and was continued; and afterwards it was appended to one or two pieces really belonging to an earlier time which were reprinted in the "Recreations," and bore this signature there merely as a sign-manual of their authorship. Finally, I may remind the reader that this kind of thing had a peculiar fascination for Lamb's mind in its more tricky moods, and that he would frequently close a letter containing risky criticisms of a friend's work, or some expressions of happy contumacity, by appending to it the signature of—the man he was writing to!

Pp. 195–8. Sir James Mackintosh, after making a European reputation by his defence of the principles of the Revolution (*Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, 1791), went to the bad and became a placeman. Lamb was proud of this epigram, because it instantly destroyed the "Albion," of which he (C. L.) had been the main propping talent.

Mr A———n was Mr Addington, afterwards Viscount Sidmouth, who was invited by the King to form a Ministry in 1801, when Pitt withdrew on the Catholic Relief question.

C———g and *F———e* are Canning and Hookham Frere, Eton boys both, and men whose literary talent must have commended them to Lamb's affections, when he was alone in the night. But in his public capacity, as a political lampoonist, he could regard them only as the supporters of Pitt, and the Castor and Pollux of the "Anti-Jacobin."

Those three Epigrams were not reprinted in the "Recreations," for they had ceased to have actuality in 1822. In those that follow, the "R. et R." indicates that they *were* reprinted there, though the date appended is that of their earlier appearance. *The Triumph of the Whale* ("Examiner," March 15, 1812) requires no comment. Of the two *Epigrams* (ditto, March 22, 1812) only the second was reprinted in the "Recreations." It had—by the decease, in the interval, of the poor old King who was *not* Regent—gained more point and meaning than belonged to it when it first appeared. *The Godlike* ("Champion," March 18, 1820) is, in its earlier lines, but a free paraphrase of the kind of things that admirers of George—who was now King, and therefore twice as admirable as before—found to say about him, and said them even to his face. The Queen Caroline affair was becoming acute, or at least hot, about this time. The reference to George III.'s madness was required here by the rules of the craft of political lampooning, and really "meant nothing personal," as who should say.

Pp. 198–9. *The Three Graves* ("Champion," May 13, 1820) was, as Lamb said later, "written at the time, now happily forgotten, of the spy system." That time was during the whole of Lord Liverpool's administration, but in 1820, perhaps, the system may be considered to have most completely covered the country with a net-work of agent-provocateurs and other monkey-minded people, all sedulous at their dirty little trade of traitor-making. That it was the business of the Castles's, the Olivers, and the Edwards's, not to discover traitors, but to make them at all costs—as it is always the business of such creatures to do—was a scandal so notorious that Sir Samuel Romilly did not hesitate to call for a Parliamentary enquiry into the whole rotten conspiracy. The year 1820 may, indeed, be regarded as the blackest moment in the history of modern Reaction, and it was a moment when England, as a moral influence in the world, had become merely an adjectival expression, to which the Holy Alliance was the noun substantive. Yet England remembered herself again, what she was; and there was a new dawn and a better day.

The *Sonnet to Matthew Wood* appeared in the same number of the "Champion." Wood was twice elected Lord Mayor of London, in 1815 and 1816. But as Ministers did not like his politics, they went to dine with him neither the first year nor the second. The truth is, he was no friend to the kind of persons of whom Ministers at that time needed a great supply—for instance, he had detected "an atrocious conspiracy of thief-takers to get

innocent men convicted of coining"—and later he made himself unpopular with everybody except the nation by his championing of Queen Caroline.

"*The player's son*" is again Canning, whose mother went upon the stage after her husband's death.

"*The pickpocket Peer*," Lord Melville, tried by his peers on a charge of peculation of public moneys, but acquitted by a large majority.

Pp. 200–201. *The Projected Journey* and *Song for the Coronation* were both in "Champion" for July 15, 1820. The signature R. et R. is particularly happy, appended to the last—it might stand for *Rex et Regina*. Queen Caroline had come to London, claiming the right to be recognised in the Coronation proceedings. But when she presented herself at the door of the Abbey, she was pushed away. The word "vow" is an error on Lamb's part: the true Doric requires "wow." *The Unbeloved* is again Canning: Lamb seems to have disliked him! The Reader will be able to fill in the name of Castlereagh with the missing letters and the inevitable associations. The "*chatty, childish Chancellor*" was John Scott, Lord Eldon, of whom so many good stories are told. *Headfort* was unfortunate in his loves, and is well forgotten.

With *The Royal Wonders* we have a change of scene. It is now the "Times" (August 10, 1830)—*et nos mutamur in illis*. France was then fresh from a revolutionary episode, expressed in the figure of a fleeing king: England had her William, who put off the King and put on the Sailor—ashore—as much as possible. Hence these mirifications.

Miscellaneous Epigrams (pp. 203–4)

These are from various sources, scarce worth specifying. The third, poor thing as it is, pleased Lamb somehow, so it was printed in the "Recreations" and signed with the royal signature, to show its common parentage with other productions in that volume. It has reference to the advertisements of a quack called Solomon, who vended Balm of Gilead. I have myself heard old people talk of Solomon and his Balm. *The Poetical Cask* has reference to a newspaper paragraph announcing that the barrel in which Lord Byron's remains had been brought to England was being exhibited. *Cuique Suum* has been referred to already. The "Literary Gazette" was edited by William Jerdan, of whom Lamb once speaks as if he had known him personally, but Jerdan does not speak of having ever met Lamb. This unkind remark about the "Gazette" merely means this, that there was a brief struggle between that organ and the newly-founded "Athenæum" for supremacy, and Lamb was an "Athenæum" man. In this case, we see, the victorious side pleased Cato as well as the Gods.

There is a scrap of a note to Moxon in which Lamb asks him to "scamper off with this to Dilke and get it in for to-morrow;

then we shall have two things in for the first week." This could not refer to the absolute first number of the "Athenæum," with which Dilke had nothing to do; but it might very well refer to the first number at the reduced price (which was considered an extraordinary and perilous innovation) of fourpence. The contributions, also, which could be so edged in at the last moment must have been "very little ones"—and, in brief, I find that the first fourpenny issue (Aug. 6, 1831) contains those two epigrams, which are markedly in the manner of Lamb's witticisms of that time. The second of the two having no title, I have given it one.

Satan in Search of a Wife (p. 207)

This ballad was published by Moxon in 1831, a thin little book with Cruickshank illustrations, but without author's name. In Moxon's advertisements, however, it was described as "By the author of *Elia*." It neither commanded success, nor much deserved it—for here, at least, I am quite of Canon Ainger's opinion, that "the verses are indeed but little worthy of their author." It is not as a part of his literature, however, but as a part of his life, that these verses and some other things—*e. g.* Ritson *versus* Scott—are of interest and even of value to us. Tailors, like hanging, were a topic that had a curious appeal for Lamb; and the fact of their sitting at work with all "hell"—or the cavity into which they stow the shreds and pieces of cloth that fall to them as "cabbage" or perquisites—beneath them, must, one feels, have been dragging him to write something heroic about them, all his life. As for this thing, it is for the student, the psychologist, not for the Reader, who has "his pleasure to attend to." It is a forced and factitious performance, and therefore has an appearance of kinship with the masterpieces of the stupid. But the heavy and the weary weight of that long endurance, his life, was telling upon him markedly at the turn of the decade, and we need not wonder if his almost exhausted spirit took desperate and unlikely ways of being, or appearing to be, as merry as of yore.

PLAYS, PROLOGUES, AND EPILOGUES

The history of Lamb's efforts to write for the stage is worthy of an extended study, but the main facts of which the study would have to give account are—an undoubted incapacity, a lifelong ambition, or at least desire, and a consistent failure. He lacked some qualities of mind that are absolutely necessary in the dramatist, and the very gifts which made him an incomparable Essayist and Critic stood in his way when he sought to approach the stage. He was not particularly happy even in his Prologues and Epilogues, in some of which, indeed, his infelicity is of the most

saddening kind. The truth is that on all this side he was, without knowing it, a literary confectioner, and an imitator; an imitator even of imitators, and the echo of a confusion of re-echoes. When he sat down to write "John Woodvil" he had in his mind, not a dramatic story and the passion of it, urging him on to sincere utterance, but a recollection of three thousand Shakspearian turns of phrase, which he new-applied with delight, and a consciousness of a dozen or so typical *mises-en-scène*, which pleased him so much that he felt he had invented them. The outcome of his efforts on that occasion was a work which has undoubted interest as a literary exercise, and even undoubted beauties here and there as a literary work. Its graces are those which a study of the beautiful in poetry, and the pretty in expression, and the verbal retort in humour, enabled him to give. But construction, characterisation (of *real* character), passion, and power, which the deep-thoughted mind of a student of life and the informed moral intuitions of a dramatist should have given it—"Not here, O Apollo!" And yet, in every line he refers us back to models in whom we may find them all. Again, when he sat down to write his famous Farce, it was as an imitator of what the stage world had already accepted as farcical in situation and as funny in dialogue: he saw what he wrote, or was about to write, through a haze of reminiscences of all the farces he had ever seen. When writing "John Woodvil" he did not realise that literature is a transcription indeed, but a transcription of Life and not of preceding Literature. When writing "Mr H——" he did not realise that the stage must hold the mirror up to nature,—even artificial nature, conventional nature, unreal or unnatural nature—but to nature, and not to the Stage of last night or the night before. I am not sure that he ever, to the end of his days, fully realised either of these things. So, too, when he sat down to write an Epilogue or Prologue: his knowledge, his connoisseurship, was too much for him, and never gave his intelligence a chance: he could not place himself outside of a consciousness of all the Prologues and Epilogues he had ever read. Therefore, instead of having something real, something meaningful and matterful and really his own to say, and trying to say it in the best and directest fashion, he is too often feeling after the *kind* of thing which the famous Prologue and Epilogue writers would have been likely to say had they sat in his chair just then, and trying to reproduce the *kind* of way—the kind of fetches and the kind of effects—with which they would have said it. And we need not wonder if, in straining to be like other and quite inferior people, he is, once or twice in a way, quite unworthy of himself. Finally, these things are said in no disparagement of Charles Lamb, but somewhat as a plea for differentiation among the degrees of his manifold excellence. The King's chaff may be as good as other men's corn, but the King's corn is a long way better than his chaff, though it is all worth garnering by us.

John Woodvil (p. 227)

Lamb seems to have begun this in August 1798, and to have worked at it, in a desultory but by no means an indifferent way, during the next sixteen months. Excerpts were sent to friends, Southey, Lloyd, and others, and he was ready to argue with the dearest of them as to the merit of passages and scenes. "Love me, love that scene!" he says once. Yet he altered the work a great deal, both in progress and after it had been completed and submitted, as his finished masterpiece, to the admiration of his friends. To do his friends justice, they admired with discretion, but not with unintelligence: and Wordsworth seems to have filled the young poet's heart with bitterness and black thoughts by merely "liking" his Play. At Christmas 1799 he sent it to Kemble, with a view to its production on the stage. In November 1799 he wrote to Kemble "to know the event of my play. . . . As I suspected, came an answer back that the copy was lost:" and therewith a courteous intimation that if he would supply another copy, he would learn the "event" in a week. The event was of course non-acceptance; whereupon the poet determined to print. And print he did, apparently at his own risk and to his own loss, in 1802: the first title of the play, "Pride's Cure," having been by this time abandoned. Its reception was no better than one would expect. Whatever the silliness of the story, and the haziness of the characters, and the total lack of moral articulation and of literary construction, the Play has yet an atmosphere of poetry, it is written in a good language throughout, and has passages of real beauty; and the airs that blow about it come straight from Sherwood, which is half-way, at least, to Arden. But neither those defects were truly pointed out, nor those merits recognised and welcomed. The critics only noticed that he did not write as they wrote, and reproved him for it. Lamb reprinted "John Woodvil" in his "Works," 1818, and that is of course the text which has here been followed. Textual questions are not discussed in this Edition; but it would be unfair not to tell the Reader, who may be an enthusiast, that the late Mr Dykes Campbell contributed to the "Athenæum" in 1891 (Oct. 31, Nov. 14) two long and learned articles, giving very fully the results of a collation which he had been able to make between the printed text on the one hand and, on the other, a manuscript copy sent to Manning about Christmastide 1800. These articles have lately been reprinted *in extenso* among the Notes to another Edition, to which the enthusiast, or person who cannot get too much of a good thing, is confidently referred.

The Witch (p. 273)

("Works," 1818)

This—like *Woodvil in Battle* and *The Lover*—was a passage in

John Woodvil, thought much of by Lamb at the time of writing it, but omitted for no very good reason when he was preparing his second copy for Kemble.

Mr H—— (p. 275)

("Works," 1818)

There is a double interest attaching to this piece; a domestic and a historical one. A domestic interest, because we associate it with the time when Charles and Mary Lamb were so anxious by all and any good means to increase their revenues a little[1]: and a historical interest, because its fate has become famous, a stock instance of the once-acted-and-forever-damned among dramatic pieces. The possibility, even, of a piece being accepted was something worth making sacrifices for: so, extreme measures were taken of asceticism and duresse. Nightly during the winter of 1805–6 Charles banished himself to a room—the famous "lodging" of Mary's letters—which he had taken at a rent of three shillings a week, in the hope that the unhomely scene as well as the immunity from callers would make it easier for him to concentrate his attention—which he seems to have found difficult in those days—and to stick to his task, as though these were office hours. Towards the end of February it was finished. He was pleased with it, Mary was pleased with it: better still, the Manager of Drury Lane, Mr Wroughton, to whom Mary herself took the manuscript, intimated (after a lapse of four months) that he also was pleased with it. The letters of the time are joyous; exultant; vaingloriously happy in our good fortune: the successful author discusses how he shall have the cards printed that are to pass his friends to the Boxes about, say, the ninth night of the wonder. The tenth of December—"My night," as he later called it—came. I quote Talfourd:—

"Great curiosity was excited . . . the house was crowded to the ceiling; and the audience impatiently awaited the conclusion of the long, dull, intolerable opera of 'The Travellers,' by which it was preceded. At length Mr Elliston, the hero of the farce, entered, gaily dressed, and in happiest spirits—enough, but not too much, elated,—and delivered the prologue with great vivacity and success. The farce began; at first it was applauded; but the wit seemed wire-drawn; and when the curtain fell on the first act, the friends of the author began to fear. The second act dragged heavily on, as second acts of farces will do; a rout at Bath, peopled with ill-dressed and over-dressed actors and actresses, increased the disposition to yawn; and when the moment of disclosure came, and nothing worse than the name of *Hogsflesh* was heard, the

[1] See Introduction to "Tales from Shakespeare," vol. vi. of this Edition.

audience resented the long play on their curiosity, and would hear no more. Lamb, with his sister, sat in the front of the pit, and having joined in encoring the epilogue, the brilliancy of which injured the farce, he gave way with equal pliancy to the common feeling, and hissed and hooted as loudly as any of his neighbours." It was a bitter disappointment, however, to Mary; and to himself also a heavy blow. Witness the fact that he says next day he must give up tobacco.

What annoyed the people was less the vulgarity or uncouthness of the name than the vulgar triviality of mind, as it must have seemed to them, that could occupy itself so elaborately and so immensely about such a trifling thing. After all, there was nothing about the name so very staggering—this, I find, is the first thought of every friend whom I have induced to read the farce for the first time. Nor was the name even an unfamiliar one. Lamb's own friend of a later day, Thomas Hood, had been taught his letters by two Misses Hogsflesh, who kept school in Token House Yard; and to some at least of that night's audience the name was doubtless made familiar and ordinary, if not even endeared, by association with a well-known cricketer and a well-known Boniface of the time. It was of course a peculiarly "Lamby" foible, and inevitable in Lamb, that he should find the very idea of such a name inexhaustibly entertaining: and yet without journeying further than he sometimes went himself in search of a joke, one might argue fairly that his own name was Hogsflesh. For whereas we distinguish between sheep and mutton, calf and veal, bullock and beef, yet lamb is lamb whether living or dead. Now it happens that in the south of Scotland at least, and probably also in the north of England, a somewhat full-grown lamb, or a sheep too young to have ever been shorn, is called a Hog. And therefore such Lamb, when it reaches the table, whether it has been christened Charles or no, may fairly be denominated Hogsflesh.

The story goes that the Management thought the Farce would do well in spite of the unfortunate first night, and therefore they would have continued it in the bills, but that the author insisted on its withdrawal: which story needs a deal of verification. And yet it is very true that that night's audience had only become acquainted with half the joke. For after all, the grand motive, the originating thought, the *primum mobile* of this creation, was neither more nor less than Charles Lamb's delight in a pun. The whole thing doubtless began in his mind, as the last line of the farce ends with a play on the accepted and odourless name of Bacon. From Bacon he thought his way to Hogsflesh, and from that to the notion of a man handicapped and haunted by the possession of a socially-impossible patronymic.

The Wife's Trial: The Pawnbroker's Daughter (pp. 307 and 339)

The first of these was printed in "Blackwood's Magazine," in December 1828, and the second (probably written a good deal earlier) in January 1830. Both represent a considerable advance, in their different kinds, upon *John Woodvil* and *Mr H——*. In Lamb's later farce there is more construction. There are more bones; and, to my thinking, a great deal more humour, wit, and wisdom, than in *Mr H——*. He did not live long enough to reprint it in a book. It was incorporated, however, in Moxon's 1870 edition in four volumes (the basis of the Fitzgerald Edition), reappeared in the Fitzgerald Edition, also in Mr Shepherd's, 1875—only to be excluded contumeliously from the Eversley Edition in 1884. In *The Wife's Trial*, also, though Lamb did not choose a particularly happy subject, there is a strength in the handling that did not belong to the sinews of the youth who wrote *John Woodvil*. The story, however, was made to his hands, this play being only a dramatisation of one of George Crabbe's Tales, *The Confidant*. In so far as Lamb innovated upon the story, he abolished rational motive, and so weakened its moral coherence and dramatic character. Both of those plays were offered to Managers and both rejected, but *The Wife's Trial* was printed as a kind of appendix to "Album Verses."

Prologues and Epilogues (pp. 368–79)

Of these exercises in a lost art not much need be said here. Perhaps the best of them is the Prologue to "Remorse," that to "Faulkner" being also superior to the rest, but having the fault of being all outside talk about a book, and of never getting into the playhouse or into contact with the play. The "Antonio" Epilogue is forced and imitative; that to "Time's a Tell-Tale" is imitative and unfortunate. But the best of all Lamb's exercises in this kind is his own Prologue to his own "Mr. H——," which is entirely admirable.

Epilogue to "Antonio." This has been preserved for us only in a letter to Manning. For the history of "Godwin's night," as Lamb might have said, see "Critical Essays," pp. 65–9, and p. 309.

Prologue to Godwin's "Faulkner." This play was based upon an episode in Defoe's "Roxana," so much resembling the story of Richard Savage and his mother (as it is written by Dr. Johnson) that Lamb, on first reading Godwin's play or getting an account of its plot, supposed that Godwin had taken his idea from the Johnsonian life and not from Defoe's romance.

Epilogue to "Time's a Tell-Tale." This—the Epilogue, not the Play—was withdrawn after the first night. It is fitly followed by

Prologue to "Remorse." "The only offspring of Coleridge's pen

which earned pudding as well as praise," says Mr Dykes Campbell, "*Remorse* ran for twenty nights, and he received for his share £400."

Epilogue to "*Debtor and Creditor.*" James Kenney, the author of this, was a great friend of the Lambs. He is the "wayward spiteful K." who carried off, "in spite of tears and adjurations to thee to forbear, the Letters of that princely woman, the thrice noble Margaret Newcastle," from Elia's bookshelf. See vol. i. p. 52. And his wife, who was the relict of Lamb's old friend Holcroft, and a Mdlle. Mercier by birth, was that "part-French, better-part Englishwoman," who carried off Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke. Truly a detrimental pair!

Prologue to "*The Wife.*" For Sheridan Knowles, see verses at p. 111, and Note thereon. An earlier draft of this Prologue is at South Kensington, and may be given here, that the last word may still be Lamb's:

STERN heaven in anger no poor wretch invades
More sorely than the Man who drives *two trades*,
Author and Actor! why has wayward fate
Decree'd to oppress me with the double weight?
Wanting a *Prologue*, I in need applied
To three Poetic-Friends; was thrice denied.
One gaped on me with supercilious air,
And mutter'd "vagabond, rogue, strolling player."
A poet once, I found, with looks aghast,
By turning player, I had lost my *caste*.
Wanting a *Speaker for my Prologue*, I
Did to my friends behind the scenes apply
With like success; each look'd on me askance,
And scowl'd on me with a suspicious glance.
The rogues—I dearly like them—but it stung them
To think—God wot—a bard had got among them!
Their service in the drama was enough:
"The poet might rehearse the poet's stuff."
Driven on myself for speech and prologue too,
Dear patrons of our art, I turn to you!
If in these scenes that follow you can trace
What once has pleased you, an unbidden grace,
A touch of nature's work, an awkward start,
Or ebullition of an Irish heart,
Cry, clap, commend it. If you like it not,
Your former kindness cannot be forgot.
Condemn me, damn me, hiss me to your mind—
I have a stock of gratitude behind.

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